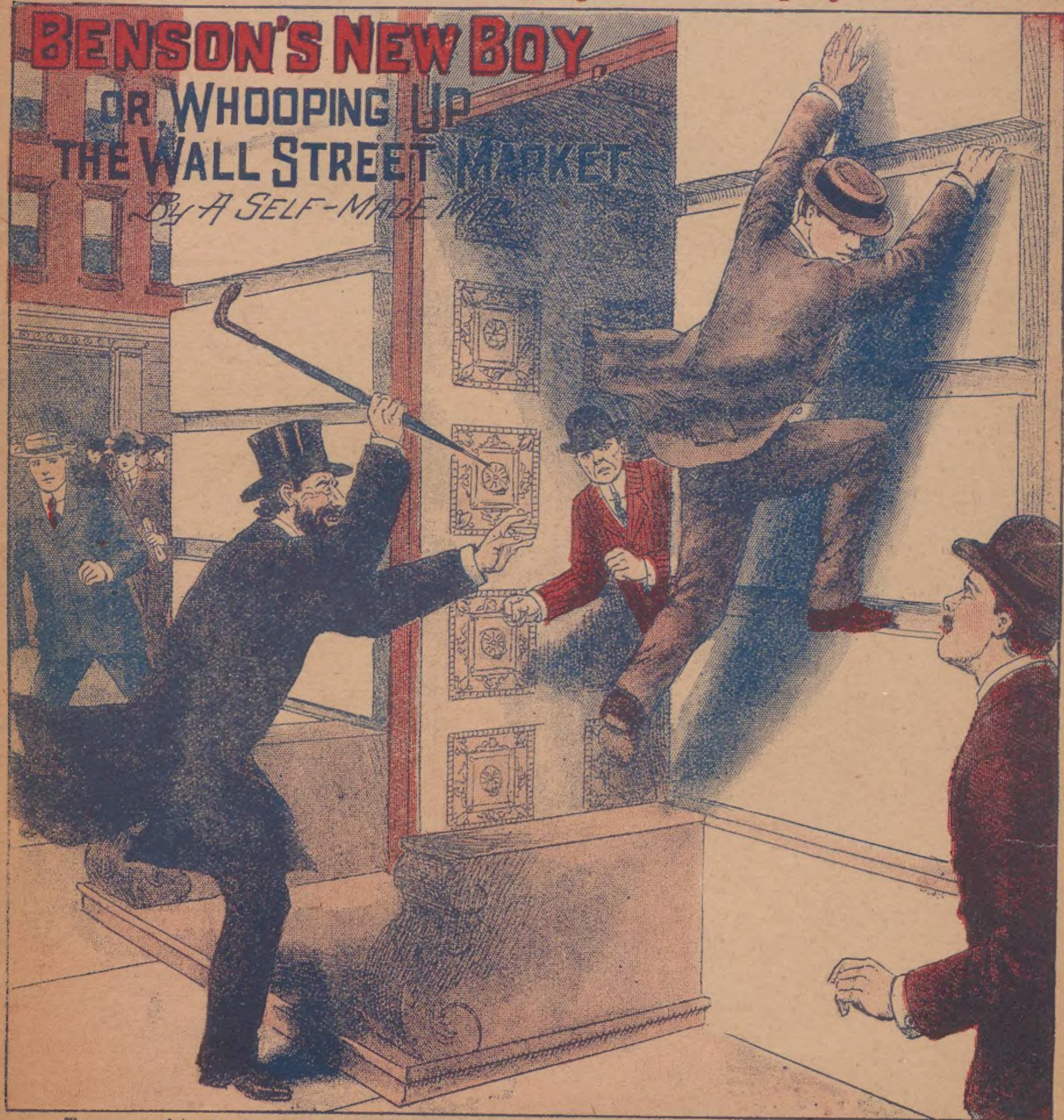


# FAME AND FORTUNE WEEKLY.

## STORIES OF BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY.



To escape his angry pursuer, he began to climb up the face of the building. There were big joints between the stones, and he got his hands and feet in the openings, and began to work his way upward.



# FAME AND FORTUNE WEEKLY

Issued Weekly—Subscription price, \$4.00 per year Canadian, \$4.50; Foreign, \$5.00. Copyright, 1927, by Westbury Publishing Co., Inc., 140 Cedar Street, New York, N. Y. Entered as Second Class Matter Dec. 8, 1911, at the Post-Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879

No. 1162

NEW YORK, JANUARY 6, 1928

Price 8 Cents.

## Benson's New Boy

OR, WHOOPING UP THE WALL STREET MARKET

By A SELF-MADE MAN.

### CHAPTER I.—Benson's New Boy.

"Say, are you Benson's new boy?" asked a freckle-faced youth, evidently a Wall Street messenger, with a grin, confronting a sharp-featured boy of about his own age and build, who had just come out of an office building on New Street.

"Yes, I'm Benson's new boy. What of it?" replied the lad addressed rather aggressively, as if he scented trouble and was prepared to meet it.

"Nothin', only when new things come to New street they have to be initiated," said the first speaker, and he gave the other a quick shove just as a third youth, who had been standing back in an expectant attitude, sneaked up behind him and dropped down on his hands and knees.

The result was Benson's new boy, whose name, by the way, was Billy West, turned a half somersault over the boy behind, and landed on the sidewalk on his head and shoulders in a most undignified way. The two boys who had worked the trick laughed hilariously at the new boy's discomfort and then took to their heels.

But Billy was on his feet and after them in a twinkling. There was blood in his eye, for he was mad enough to chew a spike.

"They'll be something doing when I lay my hands on those fresh guys," he muttered.

Billy was a swift runner, and was rapidly overtaking his aggressors when they vanished around the corner of Exchange Place. He turned the corner a moment later, but the boys were not in sight.

"Bet a dollar they've dodged into the Vanderpool Building," said Billy to himself.

He dashed into the entrance of that building, intent on wreaking vengeance upon the practical jokers, and came into collision with a short, stout broker who was passing out. Boy and broker went rolling on the floor, and after them rolled a big overturned pot of paint which had dropped from a scaffolding above, where two men were at work repainting the ceiling. The collision was a fortunate thing for the broker, for had it not happened he would have been stunned by the heavy pot as well as deluged with its contents.

He didn't know that, however, and he sputtered with rage over the tumble, and the choice names

he called Billy made the air sizz in that vicinity. To make matters worse the paint-pot rolled against his new summer trousers, which were of a light color, and left a big green spot that covered the whole of his knee.

"You young rascal, I'll make you sweat for this," he cried.

"It was an accident," answered Bill, brushing the dust from his clothes.

"Accident be——"

"Hold on, Mr. Bunker," interposed an eye-witness of the occurrence, a brother broker; "you ought to thank that boy instead of swearing at him."

"Eh? What's the matter with you? Thank him! Why, the young scamp knocked me down. Thank him! If there was an officer at hand I'd have him arrested."

"No, you wouldn't. He saved you from getting that pot of paint on your head. You just escaped it by a hair. I saw the whole thing. If that pot had hit your head it would have given you a nasty wound, and you would have been covered with paint from head to foot. You owe the boy an apology for swearing at him, and your thanks for saving your skull."

Broker Bunker looked at the metallic paint pot, and then at the big pool of paint near the entrance where the pot landed. His rage melted away as he began to realize that there might be some truth in what Broker Newbury said.

"Is that really a fact, Newbury?" he asked.

"You may take my word for it, with the confirmatory evidence you see before you. That boy, whoever he is, did you a great favor by bumping into you."

"Well, my lad, I'll take back what I said to you," said Broker Bunker, turning to Billy West, who in the excitement of the moment had forgotten all about the boys he wanted to catch, who, unknown to him, were looking down on the scene from the turn in the staircase, and chuckling in high glee. "I'm also much obliged to you for saving me from that paint pot."

"You're welcome," returned Billy.

"Are you a broker's messenger?" asked Bunker.

"Yes, sir. I'm Benson's new boy."



"Benson's new boy?" ejaculated the broker, somewhat surprised at the odd reply. "Do you mean Samuel Benson, the broker?"

"Yes, sir."

"So you're his new messenger, eh? What's your name?"

"Billy West."

"You look like a wide-awake lad, and you are certainly spry on your feet. You didn't see the paint pot coming, I suppose?"

"No, sir; nor I didn't see you coming either, else I wouldn't have butted into you," replied Billy.

"It appears to have been a fortunate circumstance for me. Say, Newbury, how can I show myself in public with that splash of green paint on my trousers?"

Billy took advantage of the chance to make his escape to the street, and was presently on his way to Benson's office, which was situated at No. — Wall Street.

A typical New York lad was Billy West. He lived in a double-decker tenement on one of the thoroughfares off Grand Street, and his mother went out by the day to clean offices—that is, she left her rooms between three and four in the afternoon and got home around eight in the evening.

Billy ate his dinner usually after getting off from work, and then walked up to his stamping grounds in the neighborhood where he lived, and filled in time with one of his friends, or his crowd, till he felt like going to bed. Billy was not tough in his manners or talk, though he was as hard as a knot, physically speaking.

He was just like any other boy of the social grade in which he mingled—except that he was a bit smarter than most of his associates, and had certain ambitious hopes which he expected to realize before he died. He had but a dim remembrance of his father who, in his time, was a truck driver, and one of Billy's ambitions was to make enough money to support his mother without the necessity of her going out to work. She had always worked hard to keep a roof over their heads, and feed and dress her only son respectably while he was attending the public school.

Billy appreciated what she had done for him, and he resolved to make it up to her if they both lived long enough. Mrs. West entertained such a high appreciation of education that, though it was a hard struggle, she kept her son at the public school until he graduated from the grammar department, an advantage that most of his associates did not enjoy. Then Billy went out to work. He had poor luck with his jobs, for some reason, and did not hold one for any length of time. For that reason his mother found him rather unreliable as a wage earner. He claimed that it was not his fault and she believed him. Two weeks prior to the opening of this story, while Billy was again a knight of leisure, his mother asked the boss of an office where she was doing work if he could get anything for her son to do. This gentleman was acquainted with Broker Benson, and knew that the trader's office boy had just left. Accordingly he wrote a note to the broker asking him to give Billy West a trial in his office, and handed it to the boy's mother. Billy presented the note at the trader's office early

next morning and was given an opportunity to make good. He had now been ten days on the job and, as far as he knew, he was giving satisfaction, for no fault had been found with him.

It was nearly three o'clock when Billy entered the office and presented himself at the cashier's desk. One of his duties was to carry the day's deposit to the bank, and a glance at the clock told him that he had no time to lose.

"Mr. Benson wants to see you in his room," said the cashier.

"How about the bank, sir?" asked Billy.

"Never mind about that. Attend on Mr. Benson."

"All right, sir," and Billy walked through the reception room and entered the private office. The broker looked up as he walked in.

"I've been waiting for you, young man," said the trader, laying his hand on a package. "What's the matter with your ear?"

"My ear, sir!" exclaimed the boy in surprise.

"Your right ear. There is blood on it."

Billy put his hand to his ear and found there was quite a cut on it. He had not noticed the injury, which he knew he must have received the tumble he was treated to in New Street.

"Been having a fight?" asked the broker, severely. "It struck me that you were away a long time on the errand I sent you."

"No, sir, but I guess there would have been a scrap if I caught the chaps who got a little too gay with me."

He then explained the monkey-business that had been rung in on him because he was a new boy in Wall Street, and wound up by telling how he had butted into Broker Bunker at the entrance to the Vanderpool Building, and saved him from getting a pot full of green paint on his head. Mr. Benson smiled a bit at his story, particularly that part which dealt with the overthrow of Broker Bunker.

"I suppose if you meet those boys again you will try to get square with them?" he said. "I advise you to leave them alone. I don't want to hear of you being mixed up in a fight. You might be arrested, and that would not reflect any credit on you."

"I won't bother with them, sir, if they leave me alone," replied Billy; "but I'm not used to having other boys walk on my neck. Anyone who tries it is likely to hear from me. I never look for trouble, but if it comes my way I know how to meet it."

"Well, you know my sentiments on the subject. If you expect to remain in this office you must behave like a young gentleman. Now, I want you to take this small package to the office of William B. Raymond, in Brooklyn. The address is on it. Be careful of it for it contains securities of some value. Here is a receipt which you will ask Mr. Raymond to sign. If by any chance he should not be at his office, wait for him unless he has gone home. In that case find out where he lives and carry the package to his house. You need not return here after you have finished your errand, but be careful of the receipt, and bring it to me in the morning."

"All right, sir. I won't deliver the package to anybody but Mr. Raymond. That is what you mean, isn't it?"

"Yes."



"What kind of looking man is he?"

"He's a man about my size, with a dark complexion, and a black mustache. He has a bald patch on the top of his head."

"I'll see that nobody else gets it, sir."

Billy walked outside, put on his hat and left the office.

## CHAPTER II.—The Roll of Bills.

Billy walked up Nassau Street to the entrance of the Brooklyn Bridge, where he boarded a car that would take him to his destination. It was about four o'clock when he entered the building where William B. Raymond had his office on the third floor. One small elevator filled the bill for this building, and Billy had to wait several minutes for the man who had charge of it to bring the cage down.

"Third floor, please," said Billy, stepping in.

The man looked at him in a supercilious way, then walked to the street door and remained there two or three minutes looking up and down the street. The chap showed by his actions that he considered it a bore going up and down the shaft, and as Billy seemed to be of no great importance he took his time attending on him.

"That fellow acts as if he was the owner of the building," thought the boy, impatiently. "He seems to consider it a piece of great condescension on his part to take me upstairs. I'd like to know what he's paid for—not to stand out there at the door gaping at passers-by while I'm waiting to be carried up to the third floor. Oh, here he comes now."

The man came back in a deliberate way, slammed the door and started up.

"How often does this elevator run?" asked Billy, sarcastically.

"What's the matter with you, kid?" replied the man.

"Nothing. I was just wondering if I'd have to walk down or not."

"You seem to be a fresh geezer."

"Maybe I am; but I was not born lazy at any rate," replied Billy, as he stepped out of the cage.

The man slammed the door and kept on up. Billy looked for Mr. Raymond's office and soon found the name painted on the glass of one of the doors, with the words "Attorney-at-Law" under it. The messenger opened the door and walked in. He saw no one in the room, which was furnished with a carpet, half a dozen chairs, a roll-top desk, a copying press, and other office adjuncts. An open door pointed to another room adjoining. Billy walked over and looked in. He saw a book-case filled with law books, a safe, a letter-cabinet, two chairs, a rug and a large Japanese screen which hid a part of the room from his view. Billy knocked on the door.

"Come in," said a thick voice.

Billy walked around the screen and saw a well-dressed man, answering the description he had received of Mr. Raymond, sitting back in his pivot-chair with his boots upon a pile of papers that lay on his desk.

"Mr. Raymond?" asked Billy, interrogatively, regarding the gentleman's appearance with some surprise, for he could readily see that the lawyer was considerably under the influence of liquor.

"That's my name. Whizzer matter? Want to see me?"

"Yes, sir. I brought you a valuable package from Mr. Samuel Benson, stock broker, of No. — Wall Street."

"That all? Put it on desk," replied the gentleman, closing his eyes.

"You'll have to sign this receipt, sir," said the boy, advancing to the desk.

"Shine what?" asked the lawyer, opening one eye as if it was an effort on his part.

"The receipt for the package."

"That's all right. Shine it yourself," and Mr. Raymond shut his eye again and a moment later emitted a snore.

Billy felt that the situation was rather embarrassing for him. To sign the receipt himself, even at the lawyer's request, wouldn't do at all. If the gentleman wasn't in condition to sign it himself he didn't feel justified in leaving the package which his employer had told him contained securities which he had been directed to be very careful of. If he brought the package back to the office he would have to give a very lucid reason for doing so. To have to report that Mr. Raymond was dead drunk, and unable to sign the receipt for the package, would probably hurt the lawyer in the brokers estimation. Though that was nothing to Billy, he did not like to have to do it. Mr. Raymond was apparently a gentleman. He was well dressed, had on an expensive watch-chain, a diamond stud of some value, while a diamond ring of at least three carats glittered on one of his fingers. Whether he was a habitual drinker, or only yielded occasionally to the temptations of the wine cup, the boy could not tell.

One thing was certain, he was drunk as a loon now. As Billy stood in an undecided way, wondering what he should do, his eye took in the lawyer's desk. It was strewn with open and folded legal documents, upon a pile of which, as we have already remarked, the gentleman's shiny boots reposed, one upon the other. But there was something else upon the desk—something that made Billy gasp. It was a big roll of bills. That they amounted to a considerable sum the boy judged from the fact that the outer bill was a \$100 note.

"Gee!" he ejaculated. "Anybody could come in here and swipe that money, and he'd never be a bit the wiser. He's all alone. Surely he must employ a clerk, or an office boy at any rate. Maybe both. I wonder where they can be? Neither is around at any rate. I must wake Mr. Raymond up and call his attention to the money. Then maybe he'll be able to sign for this package."

Billy shook the lawyer, gently at first, then harder, but got no response but snores and guttural expressions.

"Wake up!" shouted Billy in his ear, giving him a rather violent shaking. A spasmodic movement of the lawyer's feet sent the chair backward, and landed him in a heap on the floor. He opened his eyes and looked vacantly around, apparently not comprehending what had happened to him.

"Let me help you up, sir," said the young messenger, grabbing him by the arms.

"Whizzer matter? Lemme lone. Come again some ozzier time."



He closed his eyes and went right off to sleep again.

"Lord! He's so full that he needs bailing out," soliloquized Billy. "It is impossible to do anything with him. I'll have to take the package away. But what about that money? I might cover it up on the desk, but suppose somebody should come in here and find it, and get away with it, I might be accused of stealing it. That elevator man will remember that he let me out on this floor, and that I started for this end of the corridor. An investigation would show that I didn't go into any other office. Besides my boss knows I came here, and he might fire me on general suspicion, if he learned, as he doubtless would, that Mr. Raymond lost a roll of money that was on his desk when I called. I'll have to take charge of the money and hand it to Mr. Benson in the morning, explaining how it came into my possession."

Having made up his mind to do that, as the only way that seemed most prudent to him, Billy grabbed up the roll and put it in his pocket.

"If I should lose that money I'd be in a nice scrape," he muttered. "I dare say I'd be arrested and maybe sent up. It's a big responsibility, but I've got to take it. I don't see any other way out of it."

As he was turning away the thought struck him that the lawyer might come to himself after he had gone, discover his loss, perhaps remember that Mr. Benson's messenger had called upon him, telephone to the broker's house about the matter, and in the end get his address and call at his home and accuse him of stealing the roll of bills.

"I might have some trouble in explaining things satisfactorily in that case," thought Billy, figuring upon this new difficulty. "I know what I'll do. I'll write a note stating that I have taken the money for fear someone might come in the office and steal it, and leave it for Mr. Raymond to read when he sobers up. That will be a good way."

Billy seized a sheet of paper, wrote the note and put it in an envelope which he addressed to the lawyer.

"I ought to mention the amount of the roll so there may be no doubt about the sum that I'm going to take charge of," thought the boy as he was about to seal the envelope.

He pulled out the roll and counted it over carefully twice. It footed up \$3,000. Inserting that figure in the note, he sealed it and left it in a prominent spot on the desk. Then he left the office, closing the door of the inner room, and afterward taking the precaution to release the spring catch of the outer door so nobody could get in.

### CHAPTER III.—Millie Sackett.

Billy rang for the elevator several times, but the cage, which was up on the top floor, didn't come down.

"That lobster is running things to suit himself. He ought to be reported to the owner. It is evident I'll have to walk down. Well, it's easier to walk down than to walk up, at any rate."

So Billy made his way to the street, boarded a car and was soon speeding for the bridge

entrance. All the way home his mind was much exercised over the possession of a valuable package of securities and \$3,000 in bills. He kept one hand in his pocket on the roll to make sure that it didn't get away from him, while he held the package in his lap where his eye was always on it. He reached the Manhattan end of the bridge without incident and then started up Park Row with his hand still in his pocket.

"I don't like this responsibility for a cent," he muttered. "I'll have to stay in the house all evening because I wouldn't dare leave the money or the package alone for anything. Suppose some crook was to take a notion to break in on us to-night I'd be in a nice pickle."

Billy never remembered being so uneasy before.

"Why in thunder was that lawyer drunk this particular afternoon? Why couldn't he get full some other time? Well, I suppose it's my luck to have things happen this way. I wouldn't care so much if I had been at the office for some months, but I'm a new boy there, and the boss may think I acted with bad judgment. It's a fine job, and I'd hate to get fired from it. It's the best chance I've ever had in my life. I do hope I'll come out all right."

By the time Billy reached Chatham Square, where Park Row melts into the Bowery, he became sensible of the fact that he was very hungry. He looked longingly into the cheap hash-houses he passed, but didn't dare patronize any of them. The customers were not of a class that he cared to risk himself among with so much of value in his possession. He kept on up to Grand Street, down which he turned. Then he saw a restaurant where only half a dozen people were eating, and he concluded to venture in. He took a seat at a vacant table and called for a steak, fried potatoes and a cup of coffee. He ate the meal with a relish, but when he was ready to pay he had to take the roll of bills out of his pocket to reach his change. He did it under cover of the napkin and so slick that nobody could have got on to him if they had been paying any attention to him. Then he paid his check and left the restaurant. When he reached the tenement in which he lived he was hailed by several of his friends, with whom he was quite a favorite.

"We're going to a show at the Thalia Theatre to-night, Billy," said one. "You'll come, won't you?"

The Thalia Theatre was the famous old Bowery rechristened.

"Nix. I've got business on hand," replied Billy.

"Business!" cried one of the boys. "You don't work nights."

"I've got some business on hand to-night just the same. Sorry I can't go. I'd like to first rate, but you'll have to excuse me."

"Let's let the show slide till to-morrow night," said another lad.

"Will you go to-morrow night?" asked the first speaker.

"I will if nothing happens to prevent me," replied Billy.

He left the crowd undecided and went upstairs to the three rooms occupied by himself and his mother—two bedrooms and a living-room, which did duty for parlor, kitchen and dining-room. He carried a duplicate key and let himself in, for his



mother was away attending to her work. He placed the package under the pillow of his bed, but kept the roll of bills in his pocket, stuffing his handkerchief on top of it.

Billy wasn't accustomed to staying in the house, consequently after reading the afternoon paper through, from the first page to the last, he tossed it on the table, stretched out his arms and yawned.

"This is dead slow!" he growled. "I'll have to turn in early for want of something to do. My mother'll be surprised to see me hanging around the rooms. She'll think I'm sickening for the mumps or something else in that line. I wonder what the fellows are doing, and whether they're going to the show to-night? I'd like to go, bet your boots. There's a bang-up melodrama at the Thalia. We were looking at the bills last night. There are cowboys in it, and bad men, and Mexicans. The hero crosses a deep chasm with the heroine in his arms just as——"

His thoughts were interrupted by a sudden racket in the adjoining rooms on that floor, accompanied by a girlish scream. Billy jumped to his feet.

"The old woman is beating Millie again," he muttered. "It makes me mad the way they jump on that girl's neck for the least thing. She's only a stepdaughter, that's why they're always at her. It's a wonder she doesn't run away from them. Neither O'Brien nor his wife is any blood relation to her. After her father's death her mother married O'Brien. After a few years her mother died and O'Brien married his present wife, who has several kids of her own. She and the young ones lead Millie a dog's life. I guess O'Brien is afraid to interfere, anyway, for Mrs. O'B. is a holy terror when she gets her monkey up. She'd just as soon bat him in the jaw, too, as look at him."

At that point a door was opened and Billy heard Mrs. O'Brien's shrill voice cry:

"Stay out there now till I let you in, you baggage, and if I hear another whimper out of ye I'll be the death of you."

The door banged shut and for a moment or two there was comparative silence. Then he heard a sob near his door. He walked over and opened it. As he expected, he found Millie Sackett there, crying softly but bitterly to herself.

"In trouble again, Millie?" he said sympathetically. "It's a blamed shame. Come in and sit down for a few minutes."

"I daren't. She'd beat me if I did," sobbed the girl.

"She's doing that all the time; seems to me, on the slightest excuse," said Billy, drawing the girl inside the door, which he left partly open. "What's the trouble to-night?"

"I lost my place in the skirt factory to-day because work got slack, and Mrs. O'Brien is mad over it. She says I was discharged because I was lazy and good for nothing," replied the girl.

"She's grouchy because you won't be able to turn in any more money till you get another job. You've been working some time now in that factory, and Mrs. O'B. hasn't given you enough money to buy a decent dress and hat. I notice that she dresses up her own kids just the same. She's making a slave of you for their benefit as

well as for her own. I really don't see how you stand for it."

"What can I do? I've got to put up with it."

"I know what I'd do, but then I ain't a girl. I wish I could help you. I'd do it in a minute."

"I know you would, Billy," replied Millie gratefully. "You and your mother are the only friends I have. I wish I lived with you instead of with the O'Briens. They don't care for me at all, only for the work and money they can get out of me."

"That's the way it looks," nodded Billy. "Your step-father put his foot in it when he married the widow Nagles. You got along pretty well before your new step-mother made her appearance and began to rule the roost. I heard that she lambasted O'Brien Saturday night because he broke his pay envelope to buy some tobacco and maybe a drink or two."

"She did. She blackened one of his eyes and nearly broke his head with the rolling pin."

"He has my sympathy," chuckled Billy. "He's only getting what's coming to him for not standing up for you."

At that juncture the door of the O'Brien apartments opened and Mrs. O'Brien looked out. She didn't see Millie, but perceiving the door of the West rooms ajar she judged that the girl was in there. She came over and poked her unkempt head in.

"Oh, it's there ye are after me tellin' ye to stay in the hall!" she cried, glaring wickedly at the girl. "Come out of that, d'ye hear?"

Millie didn't dare hold back, and the moment she got within the virago's reach, Mrs. O'Brien seized her by the hair and dragged her outside.

Billy bounded after her.

"Here, cut that kind of business out!" he cried angrily. "What do you want to do—kill the girl?"

"Mind your own business or I'll give you a bat in the jaw!" cried the woman.

"Bat me in the jaw? Well, I guess not. I'm not O'Brien."

Such plain defiance aroused the woman's wrath. She dropped Millie and made a dash for the boy. Billy dodged her, and finding his retreat into the room cut off, darted for the stairs, for he suddenly realized that a scrap with the brawny Mrs. O'B. was not desirable.

Unfortunately for Mrs. O'Brien, he slipped and fell on the cheap, well-worn carpet, which had seen its best days in a better class tenement. The woman, unable to stop her momentum, tripped over his body and pitched forward with a force that carried her head foremost down the dimly lighted staircase. It happened that O'Brien himself was just coming up, and before he could avoid the bulky form of his wife, who he did not recognize in the gloom, he was swept off his feet, and husband and wife went rolling down the flight, arousing the other tenants by their cries and the noise they made in the tumult.

#### CHAPTER IV.—Billy Makes \$100.

O'Brien and his wife landed at the foot of the stairs in a heap, and their cries brought the tenants of that floor flocking to the spot. It was surmised that the tumble was the finale of a



scrap between them, for it was no secret that the domestic life of the O'Briens was a squally one. Mrs. O'Brien was picked up unconscious. Her head was badly cut and she looked so done up that an ambulance was called. Mr. O'Brien groaned dismally and declared that he was "kilt entirely."

Billy, after picking himself up, joined the crowd below and explained that the woman had met with her fall through accident.

"She was chasing me because I butted in to save her step-daughter Millie from being dragged into her rooms by the hair of the head. I fell, she tripped over me and pitched down the stairs. As for Mr. O'Brien, he must have been coming up when she went down, and he couldn't get out of the way. That's the whole story."

O'Brien couldn't get up on his feet. He declared that one of his legs was broken, and this was found to be so when the ambulance surgeon examined him.

As for his wife, the surgeon declared that one of her legs was broken too, also one of her arms and two of her ribs. Both of them were carried off to the hospital, and Billy's mother got home in time to witness their departure. Billy told her how the two had met with their trouble. Millie was greatly frightened over the accident which had happened to her step-parents, but she soon had her hands full with the three small O'Briens, who set up a big toot as soon as they learned that their mother had tumbled downstairs.

Mrs. West went in to help her, while Billy, forgetting about the valuable package under his pillow and the roll of bills in his pocket, rushed down to the street to tell those of his friends who were about the particulars of the affair.

It was two hours before he remembered that he had left the package unguarded, and he hurried back to his room to make sure it had not been disturbed. He told his mother about the responsibility that rested on him, showing her the roll of money, and when they retired for the night they barricaded the outer door, something they never had done before. Their fears were unfounded, for no thief tried to get in on them that night, and Billy hailed the return of daylight with great satisfaction. He reached the office on time with the money and the package safe in his possession and waited impatiently for Mr. Benson to turn up. The broker appeared at half-past nine—his accustomed time—and Billy followed him into his office.

"I didn't deliver that package, Mr. Benson," began the boy.

"Why not?" asked the broker sharply.

"Because I didn't think it right to do so under the circumstances."

"Wasn't Mr. Raymond at his office?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then why didn't you give him the package?"

"Because he wasn't in a condition to receive it."

Mr. Benson looked at his messenger in a surprised way.

"What do you mean by that?"

"He was under the influence of liquor—so much so that I couldn't get him to sign the receipt. In fact he dropped off to sleep as soon as I walked in, and I couldn't wake him up."

"Is that so? I'm surprised to hear it. You

might have got his clerk to sign for it under the circumstances."

"His clerk wasn't there. There was nobody in the office but Mr. Raymond."

"Oh, well you did right to bring this package back. You can take it over again this afternoon. I'll telephone Mr. Raymond that I will send it to-day. Put it on my desk."

Billy put the package down, glad to find that his boss was satisfied with the way he had acted, and drew out the roll of bills.

"I wish you would count this money and take charge of it," he said.

"Hello! Where did you get all that money? Pick it up on the street?"

"No, sir. That money belongs to Mr. Raymond."

"Belongs to Mr. Raymond!" exclaimed Mr. Benson, much astonished.

"Yes, sir. I saw it lying exposed on his desk, and as I was afraid somebody might come in, and, finding him helpless, steal it, for it's a large amount, I took charge of it."

The broker stared at his new messenger.

"You had a great nerve to do that, and yet, considering the circumstances, you showed pretty good judgment," said Mr. Benson, Billy rising a hundred per cent. in his estimation. He took the roll and counted it.

"Three thousand dollars," he said, "Wasn't that any temptation to you, young man?"

"No, sir; I'm not a thief," replied the boy with emphasis.

"I am glad to find that your principles are sound. Honesty is always the best policy. I don't think this money would have done you any good had you run away with it, as some boys might have done. Mr. Raymond would have missed it as soon as he sobered up, and the fact that you called at his office would have brought you under suspicion."

"That's why I took the money, sir. Suppose I had left it there and somebody had stolen it, wouldn't I have been suspected just the same?"

The broker admitted that Billy's point was well taken.

"You have a good head to wrestle with emergencies, I see," he replied with a smile. "No doubt Mr. Raymond will appreciate the favor you rendered him when I inform him."

"It will hardly be necessary for you to tell him. I left a note on his desk stating what I had done."

"You acted with excellent judgment and tact. I will——"

His telephone bell rang sharply. Putting the receiver to his ear he said, "Hello!"

He found that Mr. Raymond was at the other end of the wire. The lawyer stated that he had found a note on his desk saying that Mr. Benson's messenger had called at his office the previous afternoon with a package of some value, which he presumed were the bonds he had purchased for the account of an estate he had charge of.

"The boy didn't leave the package for certain delicate reasons, which probably he has explained to you. It is also likely he has told you what he did while he was in my office. I shall consider it a favor if you will send him over right away with the package. Of course whatever explana-



tion he has made to you you will consider as confidential, as I would not like to have the matter become known," said the lawyer.

"All right, Mr. Raymond," said the broker. "I'll send the boy right over."

He hung up the receiver and handed Billy the roll of money and the package.

"Take them over to Mr. Raymond right away, and hurry back," he said.

Billy got his carfare from the cashier and started off. In due time he reached the building in Brooklyn and found no trouble this time in getting a lift in the elevator. When he entered the lawyer's office he found a clerk at the desk in the outer room, and an office boy reading a law book. The boys asked him what he wanted.

"I want to see Mr. Raymond."

"What's your name?"

"Billy West. I'm from Mr. Benson, of Wall Street."

The boy went inside and soon came out and ushered Billy inside. Mr. Raymond looked rather seedy, but was thoroughly sober.

"Sit down," he said to the young messenger. "You brought that package of bonds, I suppose?"

"Yes, sir; here it is. Please sign that receipt."

The lawyer signed it.

"Here is your money. Please count it and see that it is all there," said Billy.

Mr. Raymond counted it.

"I'm much obliged to you, young man, for taking charge of it," he said, after ascertaining that the sum was correct. "You found me, I am compelled to admit, and I blush to acknowledge the fact, badly under the influence of liquor. I desire to say that the circumstance was a most unusual one. I am not accustomed to spirituous liquor, and the stuff went to my head. I saw a party of friends off on their European trip yesterday, and they sent up a lot of champagne. I drank a lot more of it than I should have done, and the effect was plain to you when you called here. The money which you took charge of was paid to me in cash by one of the debtors of the estate I am administering for the heirs. I can easily believe that under the circumstances in which you saw it lying exposed on my desk I might have lost it. In consideration of the obligation I feel under to you I beg you to accept this \$100 bill as a slight token of my appreciation of your services."

"I don't want any pay for doing what I did, sir," replied Billy, showing no eagerness to take the bill.

"Nevertheless you are entitled to something more substantial than my bare thanks. Take it. I can easily afford to give it to you, and I am sure you will be able to put it to some good use."

With a thrill of satisfaction Billy took the money, thanked the lawyer and put it in his pocket.

"Did you tell Mr. Benson of the condition you found me in yesterday?" asked Mr. Raymond.

"I was obliged to in order to account for bringing back that package," replied Billy. "You see I've only been in the office about ten days, and I've got to be very careful how I do things. I had to give a reason for not delivering the package to you according to my orders, and so I had to tell the truth."

"Well, it can't be helped. He won't say anything about it, and I'm sure you won't either," said the lawyer.

"Of course I won't, sir. Why should I?"

"Well, I won't detain you any longer, my lad. I thank you once more for taking care of my money, and wish you good-day."

He shook hands with Billy and the young messenger took his leave.

## CHAPTER V.—Billy's First Deal and What Came of It.

With a \$100 bill, all his own, in his pocket, Billy felt like a king on his way back to the office.

"Won't mother's eyes bulge when she sees it?" he said to himself. "She never had as much money as that in her life at one time. It's a fine thing to have money. It's something you can't get along without in this world. The more you have of it the more you seem to be respected. People take their hats off to a rich man even if he hasn't any brains. As a rule, however, a man has to have brains in order to get rich these days. At any rate he's got to have brains in Wall Street."

When Billy got back to the office he reported to Mr. Benson, handed him the receipt for the package of bonds, and showed him the \$100 bill he received from the lawyer. The broker congratulated him on the acquisition of so much money, and soon after sent him out with a message to a broker in the Mills Building. Billy was kept pretty busy that day. He wasn't in the office more than a few minutes at a time. About two o'clock he was jogging down Broad Street, on his way to the Exchange, when he ran against another messenger, named Bob Brooks, whose acquaintance he had made the first day he began work in Wall Street.

"Hello, Billy, how are things coming?" asked Brooks, grabbing Benson's new boy by the arm.

"All right," replied Billy.

"How do you like your job?"

"First-rate."

"Find Benson all right, eh?"

"Sure. Why not?"

"Been hauled over the coals for anything yet?"

"No, and I hope I won't," replied Billy.

"That's a pleasure to come," grinned Brooks. "By the way, got any money?"

"Nothing but a hundred-dollar bill, and I don't care to break that."

"You're a plutocrat," laughed Brooks, who took Billy's answer as a joke, for messenger boys, as a rule, were not so flush as to be able to carry \$100 bills around in their clothes unless the money belonged to their boss. "If you had a few dollars I'd let you in on a good thing," continued Brooks in a confidential tone.

"What kind of a good thing?" asked Billy, curiously.

"The stock market, of course. I've got hold of a tip that's a sure winner."

"What is it?"

"What's the use of telling you if you haven't any money?"

"I said I had 100, didn't I?"

"I know you said so, but that doesn't make it so."



"Then you don't believe me?"

"Well, it sounds a whole lot like a jolly."

Billy shoved his fingers into his vest pocket and pulled out the bill.

"That looks like a \$100, doesn't it?"

"It surely does, but it isn't yours."

"I'd like to see anybody else claim it," replied Billy, putting it back in his pocket. "I made that this morning."

"You did! How?"

"A gentleman over in Brooklyn gave it to me for doing him a big favor."

"The dickens you say. It must have been a big favor."

"He considered it such or he wouldn't have coughed up that bill. Now what's your tip? Maybe I'll take a shy at it."

"Promise you won't mention it to anyone and I'll tell you."

"I promise."

"L. & M. is going to be boomed by a syndicate of operators who have a raft of money at their back."

"How did you find that out?"

Brooks explained that he had accidentally overheard one of the operators talking the thing over with his boss.

"My boss is going to do the buying, and he'll make a good thing out of it, for the order will amount to thousands of shares. He's in with the bunch, and does business for them right along. That accounts for the big bank account he's got, and the style he puts on. You ought to drop in and see our office some time. It is one of the swellest suits in Wall Street."

"You're sure there's no mistake about this thing, are you?"

"I should smile. I wish I had \$1,000 to put up on it. I'd more than double my money. L. & M. is ruling now at 82. If it doesn't go above par inside of two weeks then I shall be greatly surprised."

"Well, I must get on. Much obliged for the tip. I'd like to double this \$100 of mine. I'm out for the dough every time."

"You'll clear \$150 easily enough if you put it on L. & M. Take my word for it."

Billy went on into the Exchange with his mind full of the chances that L. & M. offered to make a big haul. He believed that Bob Brooks was a pretty square lad and wouldn't give him a "ghost" story about stocks. He knew that other messenger boys had made money out of lucky deals in the market, and was anxious to do likewise. He had intended to give his mother the \$100 bill, but if he could make \$150 out of it in two weeks he believed he ought not let the chance get away from him.

He couldn't think about anything else for the rest of the afternoon, and when he got off at half-past three he dropped in at the little bank on Nassau Street, where messengers and other small speculators put through their deals, because anyone could buy as low as five shares of any stock on the list on margin, while a regular broker would not accept a marginal order for less than 100 shares, which required an outlay of \$1,000 on the part of the speculator.

He sat on one of the seats in the fairly crowded room and studied the market quotations of that day which were displayed on a huge blackboard for the benefit of customers and visitors. The

more he looked at the figures that meant gains and losses for an army of speculators the stronger became the temptation to get in on the game of chance. Finally at five minutes of four he jumped up and went to the margin clerk's window.

"I want to buy ten shares of L. & M." he said.

"On margin, I suppose," said the clerk. "It will cost you \$100."

"There's the money," replied Billy, shoving his bill through the window.

The clerk picked it up, looked at it, and threw it on his desk. He made out the brief memorandum of the deal on a printed slip and told Billy to sign it. Thus Benson's new boy made his first plunge into the speculative set. When Billy saw his mother that evening he said nothing to her about the \$100 bill he received that day. His purpose was to surprise her with considerable more than that amount when his deal came to a successful head, for that it might go the other way never struck him. Next day he was kept pretty much on the run, as the market was brisk and in consequence business was booming.

Lots of lambs were cavorting around the district, either interested in deals or on the lookout for an opening that promised easy money. Billy tried to keep track of L. & M., but was not very successful. He had little opportunity to consult the office ticker, as it was always surrounded by customers. Besides, if the cashier had seen him looking at the tape he would have suspected he was interested in the market, and Billy understood that was against the rules. He was willing to take some chances in order to make \$150. Everybody in Wall Street seemed to be looking out for No. 1, and Billy didn't see why he shouldn't do as others did. By the time the Exchange closed at three o'clock, Billy was aware that L. & M. had gone up a point that day.

"A point isn't a whole lot," he soliloquized, "but it means about ten plunks to the good for me. If it went up one point every day for two weeks it would put me more than \$100 ahead."

While eating his dinner in the restaurant that afternoon he studied the market report with a good deal of unction, comparing it with the previous day's one, and noting that all important stocks had gone up from half a point to several points.

"It seems to be what they call a 'bull' market, or a rising one," he said to himself. "That's what brings out the lambs and makes things lively in the Street. At any rate they've been pretty lively today, for I've used up a lot of shoe leather. A pair of shoes doesn't stand a fellow any time down in Wall Street. We messengers ought to club in and buy a shoe store so that we can get our foot-gear cheap."

The next two or three days were repetitions of the preceding ones. All stocks that had any life in them went higher, and at noon Saturday L. & M. closed at 89—a rise of seven points since Billy had bought his shares. He had met Bob Brooks several times and Bob had said, "I told you so," or words to that effect. He further told Billy that he had scraped enough coin together to buy five shares of L. & M., which would enable him to get a slice of the "melon" when it was cut, if he was smart enough to sell out at the right time. About



the middle of the following week, when L. & M. had reached 92 and was attracting a lot of attention, it took on a boom and inside of an hour was selling at par. Billy was sent to the Exchange about this time, and he found the floor in an uproar over the stock.

A big crowd was around the L. & M. pole, and the traders were acting like lunatics. All of them wanted to buy some of the stock, but there wasn't near enough to go around. The competition kept the price booming, and the boys at the blackboard had their hands full chalking up the quotations they came so fast. Billy was tickled to death as he stood at the rail waiting for the chance to deliver his note to his boss, who at that moment was in the thick of the rumpus. Suddenly he received a tremendous slap on the back that almost took the breath out of his body. He swung around and saw Bob Brooks grinning like a young hyena.

"Who says we're not in it up to our ears, eh?" he said to Billy.

"Nobody said we weren't; but please don't be so enthusiastic again."

"I was letting off a little of my steam, that's all," replied Brooks.

"Well, don't use me as a safety valve. I might blow up and then you'd land outside in the gutter."

"Don't you feel like shouting over L. & M.?"

"I can feel good without shouting. How high do you think it will go?"

"Ask me something easy. I'm going to sell out as soon as I can get a chance to get to the bank. I'm not such a fool as to hold out for the last dollar."

"If you're going to sell, I guess I'd better be thinking of it, too."

"It's the wisest thing you can do. This boom might collapse at any moment. The syndicate is probably cashing in now. The moment the members of it are out with their little rolls, sizz, boom ah! Look out from under," laughed Brooks.

When Billy left the Exchange L. & M. was going at 103.

"Gee whiz! I'm \$200 ahead. I must get to the little bank somehow or I may get lost in the shuffle," he breathed excitedly.

He rushed back to the office as fast as he could and found there was a note for him to take to the Mills Building. That was away down Broad Street, in the opposite direction from the little bank. He was told to hurry, too, so there was no chance for him to attend to his own business, which he had no right to expect anyway. He hustled down and back, fetching an answer to the cashier.

"Now take this note up to our printer on Nassau Street," said that gentleman.

Billy's heart gave a bound of satisfaction. His errand would take him right past the little bank.

"It will only take me a minute to give in my order to sell," he thought as he dashed out of the office. "This is the only chance I'm likely to get before the Exchange closes, and I'll freeze on to it, bet your life."

He went to the printer's first and got that off his mind, and on his way back rushed into the little bank. There was a line stretched away from the margin clerk's window and he fell in

behind the last man, hoping that nobody would delay matters at the window. It took ten minutes before he got to the window, and then he ordered his stock sold at the market, which was then 107½. He felt as if a great load had been taken off his mind as he ran back to the office as fast as he could. While waiting to be called on again he figured up as near as he could judge what his profit ought to be. He found he had cleaned up \$250, and was tickled to death.

## CHAPTER VI—Billy Surprises His Mother.

Billy was itching to tell his mother that he was worth \$350, which she would consider a small fortune, but he decided to wait till he could flash the money under her nose. She might be inclined to doubt his word, but the sight of the money would surely convince her. So he said nothing on the subject to her that night except to ask her what she would do with \$100 if she had it presented to her.

"No such luck, Billy!" she replied, "but if I did get so much I'd put it in the bank against a rainy day."

Billy laughed and went next door to call on Millie Sackett, who was still running the O'Brien household. He found that Mr. O'Brien had returned with the aid of a crutch that afternoon. That individual did not regard Billy with much favor, as he had learned from his wife, who was still laid up, that he was responsible for their misfortune.

"It's a great nerve you have to come in here after what you've done," said O'Brien in a grouchy tone.

"What do you mean, Mr. O'Brien?" asked Billy.

"What do I mean? Didn't you throw me wife down stairs and nearly kill the both of us?"

"No, I didn't throw her down stairs. Do I look as if I was able to do such a thing? Mrs. O'Brien weighs over 200 pounds. If she told you that I threw her down stairs then she didn't tell you the truth."

Billy explained the cause of the trouble which led to the angry woman tripping over him and losing her balance at the head of the stairs.

"Ask Millie if what I say isn't so. She saw what happened."

The girl corroborated his statement.

O'Brien, however, was difficult to convince.

"Sure me wife ought to know whether she fell down or was thrown down. At any rate, she intends to have the law on you when she's able to go to court. She says she's ready to swear that you intended to kill her, and as she's me wife, I'm bound to believe her."

"She'll have a swell time of it trying to prosecute me," said Billy, not at all disturbed by Mr. O'Brien's statement of what his wife intended to do. "If she has me arrested, I'll show her up in court."

"Show her up! What do you mean by that?"

"I'll tell the judge how she treats Millie, and I'll have Millie called to prove that my statement is true."

"You wouldn't dare do such a thing. She tr'ates the girl all right!" cried O'Brien angrily.



"And I suppose you treat her like a father, too?" said Billy sarcastically.

"Of course I do."

"I know better, and my mother knows better, and so do the other tenants. I'll have a dozen witnesses besides Millie to prove my words."

"Oh, you will?"

"I will."

"You've a dale of assurance to tell me that to me face!"

"I always say what I mean."

"Be hivins, if I didn't have a game leg I'd throw you out of me rooms!"

"Then I'll oblige you by walking out."

"Do so, and don't come in again, for you're not welcome."

"Don't worry, Mr. O'Brien. I won't bother you," replied Billy, wishing Millie good evening and returning to his own apartment.

Soon after the exchange opened next morning the slump came in L. & M. and it dropped back into the nineties amid great excitement.

"I didn't get out any too quick," Billy told himself when he heard about the drop in the market. "A miss is as good as a mile any day. I wonder if Bob Brooks got rid of his shares while the price was above par."

Later on he met Brooks and Bob told him he had sold at 104.

"I didn't get a chance to sell till it was up to 107½," said Billy.

"Is that the price you got?"

"I suppose I did, for I told the clerk to sell me out at the market, and he said it would be done inside of ten minutes."

"Then you made \$25 a share profit."

"That's the way I figure it."

"And you had ten shares?"

"Yes."

"You did fine."

"I made more than I expected I would when I went into the deal."

"It was a dandy tip, wasn't it?"

"First class. I'm much obliged to you for it. If I hear of anything worth backing I'll let you know about it."

"That's right. One good turn deserves another," laughed Brooks as he walked away.

That afternoon when they were through for the day they both called at the little bank and asked for a settlement. This was promptly rendered, and the boys left with their pockets well lined with cash. Billy was down on the street talking to several of his cronies when he saw his mother coming home from her afternoon's work. He followed her upstairs to tell her about his good luck.

"It's been a warm day, Billy, and I'm tired out," said his mother as she threw herself into a chair. "I wish I could afford to lay off in the hot weather."

"Well, here's a hundred dollars. You can take a vacation on that," said Billy, tossing ten \$10 bills into her lap.

His mother looked at the money in astonishment.

"Where did you get all that money, Billy?" she cried, fingering the bills gingerly. "It can't be yours."

"No, it's yours now."

"You didn't find it, did you?"

"No, mother, but that isn't all of it. Here's \$250 more that I intended to use in Wall Street to make my fortune and make a lady of you," said Billy, exhibiting the rest of his roll.

"My gracious! It can't be yours."

"Yes, it is, mother. Now listen and I'll tell you how I got hold of it."

Then he told her how he received \$100 from the Brooklyn lawyer for taking charge of his money and how he had put the money on L. & M. stock on the strength of a tip he got that it was going to boom in the market.

"And it did boom, mother. It went up a little over \$25 a share, and as I had control of ten shares, why I made \$250. Now you know all about it."

"Then I'm to take charge of this \$100 for you?" said his mother.

"No, you're to take charge of it for yourself. It's your money to do with as you choose."

"And you expect to make more money with that \$250?" she said, looking rather wistfully at the roll Billy held in his hand.

"I hope to. Wall Street is the greatest place going to make money if you can get hold of inside information like I did on L. & M."

"Two hundred and fifty dollars is a lot of money, Billy. You must be very careful of it. It would take you a long time to earn that much."

"Don't you worry about that, mother. I'm not letting any coin get away from me if I can help it."

"You are fortunate to get the good position you have. Do you think you will be able to hold it?"

"I guess I'm pretty solid now. I've been with Mr. Benson nearly a month now, and no fault has been found with me so far."

"That's a great satisfaction. I'll put this \$100 in the bank so that we will have something to fall back on in case anything should go wrong."

"All right, mother; do just as you think best," said Billy. "I hope to be able to give you another hundred or perhaps two to add to it soon. One of these days I expect to be able to buy a nice little home in the suburbs, where we can live rent free, and then I'll be able to support you on my wages and you won't have to go out cleaning offices any more."

"I'm afraid it will be a long time before you'll make enough money to be able to buy even a small, cheap house, but it's very good of you to think of providing for your mother," said Mrs. West, pleased by her son's words.

"It's my duty to look out for you. You looked out for me for a good many years, and now it's my turn to think about placing you out of the need of work or want for the rest of your life," said Billy earnestly.

"You're a good son, Billy, and things will surely prosper with you."

"I wish we could do something for Millie Sackett. She's a good little girl. It seems a shame that she's under the thumb of a couple of tyrants like the O'Briens, who have no interest whatever in her future. I'll bet they'd have thrown her out long ago only she earns money for them. Mr. O'Brien got home from the hospital yesterday, and when I saw him last night he accused me of being responsible for the in-



juries that laid him and his wife up. He said that when Mrs. O'Brien was discharged from the hospital she intended to make me sweat for it."

"Why you didn't throw her down stairs."

"Of course I didn't. It wasn't my fault that she tripped over me. I was trying to get out of her way."

"Then she can't do anything to you."

"She's sore enough on me to try, I guess. If she hauls me into court, I'll tell the judge how she and Mr. O'Brien treat Millie. At any rate, I'll have Millie to testify that I had nothing to do with her step-mother's tumble. I suppose the O'Briens have a legal right to hold on to Millie and make her work for them, but if it was shown in court that they abused her the way they do, I guess the judge would take her away from them."

"I feel sorry for her, poor child, but I don't see that we can do anything for her," replied Mrs. West.

"Maybe not now, but some day maybe we can," said Billy, getting up and walking toward the door, intending to rejoin his friends downstairs.

#### CHAPTER VII—Billy Gets a New Outfit.

Two weeks later Mrs. O'Brien got out of the hospital and returned to the tenement. She looked like a wreck of her former self, being so greatly reduced in weight that her old clothes wouldn't come within a mile of fitting her. The doctors had told her that she had had a narrow squeak for her life, and she certainly gave every evidence of the fact. At any rate, she wasn't the same woman she was before the accident, and her spirits were much affected. Billy heard of her return and looked for trouble, but she took no steps against him. Millie resigned her position as head of the household and started out to look for work. She got a position in another skirt factory on Broadway in a few days, and Billy met her downstairs when she got home from her first day's work there.

"Got a job yet, Millie?" he asked.

"Yes. I went to work today for Einstein & Finkelsham."

"Glad to hear it. Maybe Mrs. O'Brien will let you alone for a while."

"She hasn't scolded me since she got back."

"That so? You're lucky."

"She acts differently to what she used to. She doesn't have near as much to say as before. She hardly notices me."

"That suits you, I guess."

"Mr. O'Brien doesn't say much, either. He's working now, and when he comes home he eats his supper, then sits in a corner by the window and smokes his pipe and reads the paper, hardly speaking a word, even to his wife."

"Mother remarked that your rooms were very quiet. She notices it because there hardly was a night that Mrs. O'Brien wasn't scrapping either with you or her husband. I'm afraid, however, this won't last. When Mrs. O'Brien gets all right again she's bound to break out like an old sore that won't heal."

Millie made no reply, but, if looks counted for

anything, she appeared to agree with Billy's remarks. They talked a few minutes longer and then Millie went upstairs. On the first of July Mr. Benson's family moved out to their country house at Nansook, on the north shore of Long Island. Quite a colony of brokers and men of means had cottages, villas and mansions at this place, which was regarded as one of the loveliest spots within easy riding distance of New York.

As business was beginning to get dull in Wall Street, Billy had less running around to do, which suited him first rate, with the thermometer climbing higher every day. Bob Brooks told him that he would probably get a week's vacation in August, as nearly all the messengers got it, but Billy had his doubts about it, as he had only been a short time in the office and was therefore hardly entitled to the favor. The Fourth of July fell on a Saturday and Mr. Benson was at the office until after the Exchange closed on Friday. Just before he left he called the boy in to his private office.

"Billy, you've been with me a month now, and I am very well satisfied with you. You have passed the trial stage and you may consider your position a fixture. I took you on the recommendation of my friend Deering, who afterward told me that he knew nothing about you, but sent you to me to oblige your mother, who, he says, is a very worthy and industrious woman. I met him today and he asked me about you. I told him you were proving satisfactory in every way, and he said he was glad to hear it. Now, Billy, tomorrow is the Fourth, and it's a holiday. I should be glad to have you come down to my house at Nansook and stay over till Monday morning. I am going to have some fireworks in the evening, and you can help set them off. Take the eight o'clock train in the morning from the Long Island depot, and I'll send my gardener to the station to meet you and show you the way to the house. Ride in the smoker and then he won't miss you."

Billy was much surprised at the invitation and hardly knew what to say.

"I'm much obliged to you, sir, but I don't think I look swell enough to go to your place. I live in a tenement house on C—— Street, and this is my best suit."

"You look all right, Billy, but still a new suit wouldn't hurt you. I'll give you an order on a furnishing goods store for a ready-made one. You might as well get a straw hat at the same time and a couple of ties. I owe you something, anyway, as I made a couple of thousand dollars Monday through the rapid execution of a message I sent by you. I always like to testify my appreciation of services extra well done."

Thus speaking, the broker dashed off an order to a well-known furnisher on a note heading and handed it to Billy.

"Get whatever you want at the store and it will be all right," said Benson, "and be sure and come down in the morning, for I will look for you."

He pushed Billy outside, went over and got some money from his cashier and then left the office.

"Gee! An invitation to spend the Fourth with the boss!" soliloquized Billy, quite paralyzed by the compliment. "I guess I'm pretty solid with him. At any rate, he told me I was doing fine."



I fell into good luck when I came to Wall Street. I've been here a little over a month, and, besides getting seven bones a week, I captured \$350 cash. That's going some. Mother will open her eyes when I tell her I am invited to spend the Fourth and the day after with Mr. Benson at his country house, and won't she be tickled to see me in a new suit, with the latest thing in straw and a fetching necktie? And the fellows up my way will think I'm getting to be a dude for fair. They are jealous, anyway, at the swell job I have in Wall Street. Well, say, things seem to be coming my way all right."

His thoughts were intruded on by the cashier calling him to the window and handing him his pay envelope.

"You can go home now, West. I sha'n't want you any longer today," he said.

"All right, sir," replied Billy, and he hiked for the street.

He went straight to the clothing house and picked out a bang-up blue serge suit, a straw hat and a couple of ties.

"What else?" asked the clerk.

"I guess that's all," replied Billy.

"Come over to wonder counter. I want to show you our new summer shirts. You won't want to wear the vest of that suit this month or next, so you'd better take two or three shirts and a belt to go through the straps of your trousers, then you'll look all right."

"Mr. Benson didn't tell me to get any shirts," said Billy.

"Didn't he? Well, this order says 'fit bearer out in good shape,' and it's up to us to do it. We know what Mr. Benson means when he gives an order like that. He wants it carried out."

"Let me see, can't I sell you something else?"

The salesman handed it to him, and sure enough it said "a fit-out in good shape."

"All right. Show up the shirts," said the young messenger.

He picked out two, but the salesman said he ought to have at least three, so he took another.

"If those are your best shoes, I'll have to take you around to our shoe department," said the clerk. "We can't let you go out of here half shod."

Billy protested that that was rubbing it into the boss.

"Nonsense! He's got loads of money. You ought to see bill of goods he buys here for himself."

"He doesn't get his clothes here. I took a letter up to his tailor on Fifth Avenue yesterday afternoon."

"No, but he buys the rest of his furnishings here. We don't sell ready-made clothes to our swell trade as a rule. We have Wall Street men who buy suits all made up, but they are the exceptions. If you worked for one of them you wouldn't be treated to an order like this. You're lucky, for you've hired yourself out to one of the most liberal men of the street. Just take a pointer from me, and hold on to the job for all you're worth."

"I don't need any pointer for that," grinned Billy. "I'm on to this job with both feet."

"A new pair of shoes will make your grip stronger," said the salesman, pulling the boy to-

ward the shoe department, where he was fitted to a first-class pair before he realized what was going on."

"Let me see, can't I sell you something else?" said the salesman. "I think you need a——"

"No, I don't care for any biscuits!" replied Billy, edging away.

"I didn't say anything about biscuits. I said——"

"I know what you said," chuckled Billy. "Send this order to my house tonight, sure, for I've got to wear the stuff tomorrow. I'm invited to spend the day at my boss' country house, and if I ain't there I'll tell him it's the fault of this store."

"The goods will be sent before six. What is your name and address?"

"William West, Esquire, No. — C—— Street, top floor, back."

"You live in a flat?"

"No, I don't. It's just a plain tenement, without any French frills. Everybody is his own janitor, and the gas and electric light collectors never bother us with their bills."

"Now, I had an idea that you lived up in Madison Avenue or on one of the side streets near the park," smiled the salesman as he wrote down the name and address given by the boy.

"Well, your idea didn't pan out. Maybe you live up there yourself. You look like a swell guy in disguise."

"No, I wish I did. If genius were thoroughly appreciated, I would probably be living in bachelor apartments on Fifth Avenue."

"Well, I'll gamble on it, you've got nerve enough to entitle you to live anywhere. I came in here to get a suit, a tie and a hat and you've forced three shirts and a pair of \$4 shoes on me. Your boss ought to raise your wages."

"You have no call to kick, as you are ahead on the game through my efforts."

"I'm not kicking. I'll let Mr. Benson do that when he sees your bill."

"We'll take the chances of that. Why won't you let us show you our latest thing in socks. Half a dozen would go well with your new shoes. Then our handkerchiefs——"

"Say, do you want me to buy the store? You can't hypnotize me into taking anything more. If you want to do anything more for me, just call my automobile," and Billy with a laugh started for the door.

## CHAPTER VIII.—Fourth of July at Nansook.

At a few minutes of six that day the delivery wagon of the furnishing goods store where Benson's new boy got his outfit drove up to No. — C—— Street. The driver jumped out with a large and a small pasteboard box in his arms. The occupants of the tenement were not in the habit of dealing at first-class stores, and the wagon attracted a whole lot of attention. There was a big monogram on each side of the top, and underneath it were the words "No. — Broadway." The number was not very clearly inscribed over the door of the tenement, and the driver was not sure which of the two adjoining double-



deckers he was to deliver the goods at. There were several boys standing around the doorway.

"Sonny," he said to one, "does Mr. William West live in this house?"

"Who?" ejaculated the lad.

"William West."

"Billy West lives here, on the top floor, back."

"That's right," said the man, looking at the address on the smaller box.

"Say, are them things for him?"

"I should judge so as his name is on the boxes."

"What's in them?"

"There's a suit of clothes in the big box. I couldn't tell you what's in this one," and the man dived into the not over-clean entrance, and began climbing the dark stairs, where the kerosene lamps had not yet been lighted by the tenants whose duty it was to attend to them.

"Hully gee, fellows!" said the boy to his companions, "Billy has been lyin' in a new suit and other duds. Get on to the store he patronizes. He must be gettin' swell wages. He'll be givin' us the shake pretty soon. He's been wearin' his best clothes ever since he got that job in Wall Street, and now he's bought himself a new suit for Sunday. I thought they was somethin' up when he didn't come down and see us as usual."

The other lads were surprised, and for some time nothing else was talked about but Billy West's expanding importance since he went to work in Wall Street. In the meantime Billy was upstairs admiring his new suit, his shirts, his ties, his shoes, and his up-to-date straw hat. Finally he made up his mind to dress up and surprise his mother. He donned one of the shirts, put on one of the ties, then the suit without the vest, buckled his belt around his waist, and lastly topped off with the straw.

"I wish we had a big looking-glass, like they have in the store, so I could see how I look."

However, he felt that he looked all to the good, and he sat down to await his mother's return. At last she came walking in, tired after her work. Billy slapped on his hat and stood up. At first she hardly knew him so changed was his appearance.

"Billy West, is it really you?" she exclaimed.

"Why, don't you recognize your own son and heir?" he laughed.

"My gracious! So you've been buying new clothes. How well you look in them. I'm afraid you've been extravagant."

"They didn't cost me a cent."

"Why, Billy, you don't mean that!"

"I do. This outfit is a present from the boss. He's invited me to go to his summer house tomorrow and stay over Sunday. As he wanted me to look good he sent me to his furnishing store, and told me to buy what I wanted. Aren't you proud of me?"

"I'm always proud of you, Billy. You're the best son in the world."

"Thanks for the compliment. Now I'll get into my old duds and go down and see the boys."

Every member of his "crowd" had heard about his new suit and other fixings, and when he made his appearance they began "joshing" him about them.

"Who told you chaps that I had a new suit?"

asked Billy, surprised that they were so well informed.

"Oh, we know all about it. You can't fool this bunch," replied one.

Billy was exceedingly curious to find out where they had got their information, but they wouldn't tell him, and it never struck him that some of them had seen the man bring the boxes up to his place. He had to take the crowd around to the nearest ice-cream parlor and "blow" them to cream and soda before they would let up on him. Billy left the tenement early next morning to catch the eight o'clock train over in Brooklyn, and so none of the crowd saw him in his new suit.

When a couple of them knocked on the door of his mother's room to find out why he didn't come downstairs, Mrs. West informed them that her son had gone into the country to stay till Monday. The idea of Billy going into the country to spend two days knocked his crowd silly, and they didn't get over it all day. In the meantime Billy reached Nansook station and was met by Mr. Benson's gardener, who piloted him to the house—a neat villa, standing well back in its own grounds. The broker was surprised at Billy's changed appearance. He was as well dressed as any of the gentlemen's sons in that neighborhood, though his air and talk were considerably different. It was apparent that he lacked polish, and the deportment of a young gentleman. There was a knowing look in his eyes, and showed he was well up in worldly wisdom, gained by rubbing elbows with the world. Mr. Benson introduced him to his family, consisting of his wife, a son of nearly Billy's age, and two daughters, one a young lady of nineteen. There was nothing backward about Benson's new boy in getting acquainted. He soon made himself popular with Frank Benson and the younger girl.

"So you're pa's new messenger," said Daisy Benson.

"That's what I am. They call me Benson's new boy in Wall Street," replied Billy, with a grin.

"How rude of them," said the girl.

"It's just a way the messengers have to keep you from getting a swelled head," laughed Billy. "They're a jolly lot, on the whole, though some of them get a little too gay sometimes."

Whereupon Billy narrated his experience with the two lads on New Street. When he told how he had upset the stout broker in the vestibule of the Vanderpool Building, Miss Daisy laughed till the tears came.

"It must have been awfully funny," she said.

"Probably it was to a spectator. However, it saved the gentleman from getting a broken head and a ducking of green paint," and he told them the particulars.

Billy told them a lot of other funny things that had happened to him outside of Wall Street, including the tumble Mrs. O'Brien got downstairs by falling over him. That was where he made a mistake, for it showed up his low social status. Frank and Daisy were surprised to learn that he lived in a common East Side tenement, for his personal appearance led them to think much differently. The result was they acted a little shy of him after that, though they were too well bred to let him see that he had fallen a lot in their estimation. Finally his mother got into the con-



versation, and he spoke so loyally about her, declaring that she was the finest mother in the world, that Daisy began to think somewhat better of him. Billy behaved himself pretty well at the lunch table, though it was easy to see that he wasn't used to police society. In the presence of the broker, his wife and eldest daughter he was more careful what he said, and the good common school education he had helped him out. He could talk intelligently on all the topics of the day, and so got credit for knowing more than he actually did. Frank and Daisy took him out after lunch to show him the neighborhood, but they were careful not to call on any of their friends.

There was very little in the firecracker line going on in the aristocratic section of Nansook, and Billy thought the place rather slow. In fact, if it wasn't for the display of bunting on all sides he would have wondered if it really was the glorious Fourth, so quiet were things.

"If I had a few bombs about me I'd wake this place up," he thought. "Seems to me these folks around here are lacking in proper enthusiasm."

Then he remembered that Mr. Benson had mentioned about some fireworks he was going to have in the evening, and he guessed the swell people preferred to celebrate after dark. When they got back to the house they found some guests from another cottage sitting on the veranda with the broker, and his wife and daughter. Billy wasn't introduced to them, however, but that fact didn't worry him any. Finding himself alone for a few minutes he went off and hunted up the gardener, whom he found smoking in a chair at the door of the automobile garage. He got into conversation with him, and was soon hail-fellow-well-met with the man. He didn't see Frank Benson or Daisy again until dinner time.

It was the finest meal Billy had ever sat down to, though it was the ordinary, every-day dinner with the Bensons. He enjoyed it hugely and ate everything that came his way. It was dark when the family and their guests adjourned to the veranda overlooking the front lawn. In the course of half an hour Mr. Benson sent his son to tell the gardener to bring the fireworks on the scene. The sky was already alight with rockets and other lurid displays, but the greater part of this exhibition was confined to the village proper. Only cottagers who had young people indulged in burnt powder.

The gardener presently made his appearance with several opened boxes, and the privilege of setting off the roman candles, rockets, colored fires, and such things, was delegated to Frank Benson and Billy. The young messenger probably had the most fun out of it. At any rate he was sorry when the last of the stock was used up. Shortly afterward the family retired for the night and Billy was shown to a small, well-furnished room at the back of the house.

dered what kind of a time his friends were having in the city. Although he had been very nicely treated he came to the conclusion that on the whole he would have enjoyed himself better in New York.

"Fourth of July only comes once a year, and I like to cut lose when it comes around," he soliloquized. "These wealthy people are slow pokes at celebrating. They don't seem to take any interest in the day. It would have been like Sunday only for the noise that came from the village. Lord, if I had a place like this, and plenty of money, how I'd make things hum on the Fourth! I'd let the neighbors see that I was alive, bet your boots."

Billy sat for half an hour looking around, and watching the fireworks that occasionally rose from the direction of the village. At length there was no further display and the night became absolutely quiet.

"I don't like the country for a cent," he muttered. "Everything is so dead slow. Just like a churchyard. I suppose everybody in the house is asleep now, and it's only about half-past ten. I don't feel a bit sleepy. I'd like to get out and move around."

He looked out of the window. He was on the third floor, but a huge oak tree grew close beside that part of the house, and Billy saw that it would be a simple matter to reach the ground by swinging out on the stout limb that reached past the window. The temptation was strong to avail himself of this mode of getting out of the house and taking a walk either to the village or the bay.

All that deterred him was the fact that as a guest of the house it would not be just the right thing for him to make his exit in that undignified way. While he was thinking the matter over he saw three figures scale the back fence near the garage. One of them came forward and looked up at the house. Then he came close to the building and Billy noticed that he was examining the lower windows. Presently he disappeared around the side of the house. The other men remained at the fence, apparently in conversation.

"I wonder what business those chaps have around here?" thought Billy. "Looks to me as if they were up to no good."

He watched cautiously for the man who had gone around the house to reappear. In a little while Billy saw him coming from the other side of the house. He rejoined his companions at the fence. Presently they sat down on the grass. The minutes passed and they made no move to leave.

"There is something up," breathed Billy. "I'll bet those chaps intend to break into this house. It's lucky I didn't go to bed."

It struck the boy that he ought to wake Mr. Benson up and tell him of the presence of the men, but he hesitated taking such a step as he didn't know which room in the house was occupied by the broker. So he decided to watch the strangers and see what they would do. He could easily give the alarm when they got down to business. He heard a clock strike eleven somewhere in the house, but the men made no move. Fifteen minutes later one of them got up and

## CHAPTER IX.—Billy Frustrates a Burglary.

Billy didn't feel at all sleepy, and the hour being ten, was comparatively early for him. He seated himself in a chair beside the window and looked out on the calm summer night. He won-



came toward the house. When he reached the oak tree he began to climb up. He was soon lost among the leaves and branches.

"He's coming up here as sure as you live," though the boy, drawing back from the window. "I wish I had something to give him a warm reception with if he tries to come in at that window."

Billy looked around the room and finally opened the door of the closet. Standing in one corner was a double-barreled shotgun. The boy grabbed it, but soon made out that it was not loaded.

"A good bluff goes a long way sometimes," he thought, carrying it to the window.

By that time the man who was climbing the tree was on a level with the window which was easily within his reach. In another moment he thrust his head and shoulders through the opening and looked around the room. Without a moment's hesitation Billy thrust the muzzle of the gun within a few inches of his face and said "Git!" The fellow started back in consternation, lost his balance and fell straight down. He struck a small trellised arbor underneath, and the frame-work collapsed with a crash, breaking his fall, but giving him a good shaking up. The two men at the fence started up in alarm.

"I'd like to catch that rooster," thought Billy, as he saw the fellow lying half stunned in the wreck of the arbor. "He's evidently a crook and ought to be arrested."

Dropping the gun, he crawled out of the window and made his way down through the tree. While he was doing this, the man who had taken the tumble was pulling himself together and extricating himself from the debris. At that moment a window was opened on the second floor and somebody looked out. The two men at the fence immediately scaled it and disappeared. Their demoralized companion started to rejoin them.

"Hello! Who are you?" demanded the voice of Mr. Benson from the window.

The fellow made no reply, but hastened his steps. At that moment Billy dropped from the tree and grabbed him by the arm.

"Hold on, you're wanted," he said.

With an imprecation the man drew back his arm and knocked the boy down. Then he started to run. Billy was used to knocks and the blow didn't hurt him much. He was up in a twinkling and after the fellow. He caught him at the fence. The rascal turned, pulled out a revolver, and shoved it into the boy's face.

"Go back or I'll blow the top of your head off," he said fiercely.

Billy fell back and the rascal vaulted over the fence, and hurried across the adjoining property to a street beyond, where his companions had already preceded him. Billy, however, had caught a good look at his face, and he was sure he'd know him if he ever met him again. After watching the man out of sight the young messenger walked back to the house. Mr. Benson recognized him with some surprise.

"Is that you, Billy?" he asked.

"Yes, sir."

"How is it you are out there, and who was that you chased to the fence?"

"That man tried to enter the house through

my window. He came up the tree. I was on to him and frightened him with an empty gun I found in the closet of the room. He lost his balance and fell to the ground, smashing some woodwork underneath. I suppose the noise aroused you, sir."

"It did. You astonish me by saying that the fellow was a burglar."

"There were two other men with him."

"Indeed. I didn't see them. Did you get out by way of the tree?"

"Yes, sir. I intended to capture the fellow before he recovered from his fall, but I didn't succeed. I caught him at the fence, as you probably saw, but he pulled a gun on me, and I had to let him go."

"Well, well; it's fortunate you were here to-night, and that the rascal awoke you when he tried to get in at the window. I will come downstairs and let you in at the side door. Go around there."

The broker shut the window and presently came to the door and admitted Billy. Mr. Benson was rather surprised to see that the boy was fully dressed.

"You don't look as if you had been in bed," he said.

"I haven't been. I wasn't sleepy when I went to the room and sat down by the window. While I was there I saw the three men come into your grounds. I watched them, for I judged they had no business here. One of them went around the house and examined the windows. Then they sat down by the fence for a long time facing the house. Finally that chap came over and climbed the tree, thinking it an easy way to get into the house. I shoved the gun at him and told him to get. That settled the business. I guess he thought I was going to shoot," chuckled Billy.

"You've saved the house from being robbed, and I'm greatly indebted to you," said the broker.

"That's all right, sir. I'm sorry that I didn't catch the fellow."

"You did all that could be expected of you. I'll notify the head constable in the morning that these rascals are in the neighborhood. Now go to bed."

Billy did, and it wasn't long before he was sound asleep.

## CHAPTER X—Captured.

At the breakfast table Billy was regarded by the rest of the family as quite a hero.

"You're awfully brave," said Miss Daisy, regarding the boy admiringly.

"Oh, I don't know. That wasn't much," replied the young messenger.

"What, to chase that man! He might have shot you."

"He didn't shoot me, so it doesn't matter."

After breakfast Mr. Benson visited the constable's house, taking Billy with him. The boy told his story to the village guardian of the peace, and that official promised to go on a still hunt after the burglars. Billy passed a quiet Sabbath. During the early afternoon he wandered around the village and the bay shore, where he saw a number of handsome little bathing



houses that were used by the wealthy summer residents. He extended his ramble along the shore, coming at length to the low line of cliffs that lay to the eastward of Nansook.

The tide was way out, so that he was able to walk along the hard beach at the base of them, which, unknown to him, was covered at high water. As he knew that dinner would not be served till about five, he took his time. The Sound was comparatively calm and the hot sun glistened upon its wavelets. At some little distance from the shore there were a number of catboats sailing hither and thither with summer boarders from the village. Billy had never been out of New York before and he rather enjoyed the novelty of his short outing.

The cliffs wound in and out in an irregular line that trended toward the southeast, and he soon lost sight of the bathing houses and small anchored yachts of the rich residents of Nansook. No one lived on the cliffs, their summits being covered with trees and scrub bushes, giving the vicinity a lonesome look. Turning a point, Billy suddenly came upon a small, sequestered cove. Following the curve of the beach, he entered the cove, which was almost land-locked, and was somewhat surprised to see a small, dirty-looking sloop in the basin, moored by a rope to a fallen tree trunk. Smoke was issuing from the chimney that pierced the deck forward.

Walking around a large rock that stood in his path, he unexpectedly found himself in the presence of two men who were seated on another rock, smoking and talking. They sprang to their feet with exclamations on seeing him, for they had not heard his footsteps on the sand. Billy recognized one of the men as the burglar of the night before, and he naturally concluded that the other chap was one of the men who had been with him. The third fellow probably was not far off. In fact, as he started to retrace his steps, believing it wasn't healthy for him to intrude any further into the cove, he caught sight of a head and shoulders rising out of the open hatch in the forward part of the sloop.

"Hold on there, young fellow!" cried the man whose face he knew. "What's your hurry?"

"I'm in no hurry, but I've gone as far as I want to go," replied Billy.

"What brought you in here?"

"I just walked in, that's all."

"Come here."

"What for?"

"Because I say so."

"What do you want?"

"Come here and I'll tell you."

"I'm not curious, so I don't think I'll come," replied Billy, edging away.

He had the idea that the rascal recognized him and that there might be something doing if he went within the fellow's reach.

"I guess you'll come," said the burglar, yanking out his revolver and covering the boy so quickly that Billy didn't have time to dodge around the rock.

"You wouldn't dare shoot me for nothing," said the young messenger.

"Don't you be so cock sure about it," grinned the man. "I've known guns to go off accidental

like, and that might happen to this one, as I'm feeling nervous today. Fetch him here, Downey."

His companion walked over and grabbed Billy by the arm.

"Why don't you do as the gent says?" he remarked.

Billy made no resistance as he perceived the futility of it.

"I think I've seen you before," said the burglar, laying his revolver across his knees. "You're the chap who lives in the house where I called last night and you shoved a shot-gun in my face!"

"You're that burglar, are you?" replied Billy coolly. "What do you want with me?"

"We want your company for a while. Seein' that you've butted in here and discovered us, it wouldn't be safe for us to let you go and tell what you've seen."

"How long are you going to keep me? I've got to get back to dinner at five and it'll take me more than an hour to find my way to the house."

"Find your way?" retorted the burglar sarcastically. "I guess you know your way round your own stampin' grounds."

"These ain't my stamping grounds. I'm only a visitor."

"Tell that to the marines. You belong at that house. Son of the old man, I guess."

"You guess wrong. I'm only his office boy."

"Yes, you look like an office boy in that swell rig. Search him, Downey, and see how he pans out."

Downey went through Billy's clothes and the search was very unsatisfactory. All he found was a dollar bill, some loose change, and a pocket knife, some matches and a return ticket to New York.

"A dollar and thirty-six cents," said Downey, counting the money.

"Hand it over, Downey," said the burglar, and Downey did, after returning the knife and matches.

"Here's a ticket for New York," said Downey.

"Keep it for good luck," grinned his associate.

"Say, Hicks," he shouted to the man on the sloop, "chuck a piece of line on shore."

Hicks looked for a piece and threw it on the beach.

"Get it, Downey, and tie this chap's hands behind his back," said the burglar.

Billy let him do it, for he couldn't help himself.

"You spoiled a nice, profitable little job last night, young fellow, and I guess we must get back at you some way," said the burglar, putting his pipe in his pocket and getting up. "We'll just stow you under hatches aboard the sloop till we decide how we'll pickle you."

He and Downey forced Billy to enter a rowboat, in which they pushed off for the sloop, which was only a few yards away. They yanked the boy on deck, took off a hatch cover and invited him to get down out of sight. To avoid being thrown down, Billy obeyed. The hatch was clapped on over his head, and the boy found himself alone in the darkness of a small space littered with boxes and other rubbish. He heard the men roll something weighty on the hatch, and he knew that he was a prisoner without much chance to make his escape.



"I'm in a fine scrape," muttered Billy. "I wonder what these rascals intend to do with me? Maybe they only intend to hold me until they are ready to leave this neighborhood. In any case, I'm pretty certain to lose my dinner. That will be tough, for they have swell meals at my boss' house, and I guess they have a few extra frills on Sunday. As I probably won't get another invite down here, I'd like to make the most of my present chance."

"Grub is ready, Birch," Billy heard one of the men say. "You chaps come and help me carry the stuff to the cabin."

There was a tramping of feet overhead for some minutes, and the sound of men moving around on the other side of the after bulkhead of the hold. The walking ceased and conversation began in the cabin. Billy picked his way in the dark over to the bulkhead, and, leaning against it, tried to hear what the men were talking about. Their words came quite plain to his ear, and he soon found that there was a good-sized knot-hole in the partition and he put his eye to it. He saw the three men seated at a small table which was covered with dishes of food. The head burglar, whose name appeared to be Birch, was seated at one end of the table, while the others flanked him on either side.

"We've done pretty well along shore this trip," said Downey. "We've got enough swag aboard to pull up anchor and sail for the city. I'd like to see the stuff turned into cash and handle my share of it."

"I'm in favor of making one more haul," said Hicks. "We'd have done that last night if it hadn't been for that boy. He must have just got back from the village or some house in the place, for he hadn't turned in when I got up to the window."

"That was a tough fall you had, Birch," said Hicks. "It's a wonder you didn't break your neck."

"It is a wonder. That plant frame broke my fall and saved me, but I thought I was a goner at the time," replied Birch.

"Are you goin' to get back at the boy for it?" asked Hicks.

"Yes, blame him!"

"How are you goin' to serve him out?"

"We'll leave him on one of them islands near the entrance to the East River. He's not likely to get taken off for two or three days."

"He might starve to death before any one saw him," said Downey. "That would be the same as killin' him, and I ain't in favor of such a thing."

"You're too tender hearted," scoffed Birch. "What do we care what becomes of him after we land him? Just remember what he done us out of."

The conversation then turned on the various jobs they had pulled off along the Long Island north shore and how cleverly they had outwitted the constables by retiring to their sloop, which was anchored in various out-of-the-way spots within reaching distance of the houses they had robbed. Billy listened to all they said.

When they finished their meal they got out their pipes and indulged in a smoke, while they hazarded sundry conjectures as to the amount

of money their plunder would bring them from the "fence" they patronized. Finally Birch went on deck and the other two carried the dishes out to the galley forward, which was simply a small space partitioned off in the bows of the sloop. Billy had been working off and on at the line that bound his wrists together, trying to free himself, and he finally succeeded in getting one hand out of limbo. The other followed as a matter of course. The next thing he did was to strike a match and take a look at his prison. There was nothing very promising about it. There seemed to be only one means of ingress and egress and that was through the hatchway overhead, which was closed by its cover.

"I'm bottled up here and must stay till they let me out," he soliloquized. "I wish I knew of some way to get the best of them."

An hour passed away and from the silence Billy judged the men had gone ashore. He got up from the box he was sitting on, but in turning he tripped over some of the rubbish and fell against the forward bulkhead—the one that divided the hold from the galley. One of the planks forming the partition gave way and fell upon the stove. That left an opening through which Billy managed to squeeze himself, though it was a tight fit. The scuttle through which entrance was had to the galley was open and the young messenger, who had been sweltered in the hold, breathed the fresh air eagerly. Then he ventured to poke his head up and take a look. The three rascals were stretched out on the sand above high-water mark. Billy noticed that the basin seemed larger than when he was brought aboard. This was caused by the inflow of the tide, which had been rising for some time. The sloop was close in to the rocks at the head of the cove, the tide having pushed her in that direction. Her mooring line was slack and curved down into the water. Billy was sure he could jump on to the rocks, but that would do him no good, as he would be stuck there by the water which came up all around them. He saw that the burglars were not asleep, just resting on their backs. There was no way of evading them while they had their senses about them. Billy sat on a box in the galley and considered the situation. Presently he heard the voices of the burglars, and was soon aware that they were coming off to the sloop.

"I hope none of them will look in here, for if they do the jig will be up with me, and I won't get another chance to make my escape," he thought. The rascals came on board and then went straight to the cabin.

Billy poked up his head and saw that they were not in sight, and that the boat was tied alongside. His heart gave a jump, for here was a grand opportunity to give his captors the slip.

## CHAPTER XI.—Billy Turns the Tables On the Crooks.

He crawled out on deck intent on taking advantage of his chance. The boat, however, was well aft, and he would have to cross a considerable part of the deck. This would bring him close to the open scuttle leading into the cabin, through



which the men's voices came up. If they heard steps on deck they would be able to rush up and catch him before he could untie the boat's painter. However, he had to risk it, and to help matters he removed his shoes.

His stocking feet made no sound on the planks as he stepped aft, and the men got no hint of their late prisoner's presence on deck. Reaching the place where the boat was tied, Billy quickly unhitched the rope and was about to step in when a daring idea struck him. He saw that the open scuttle leading into the cabin had a cover that worked on hinges, which, when let down, could be secured by shoving an iron peg through the hasp attached to the end. By quick action he could make prisoners of the three rascals in the cabin.

The chance to execute such a brilliant coupe was too tempting for Billy to let it get by him. It would be quite a feather in his cap to capture the three burglars and recover the plunder they had stolen from the different residences along the north shore. It was not improbable that he would be recompensed by the owners of the property. Retying the boat's painter with a slip-knot, Billy crawled over to the cabin scuttle. Giving the cover a shove it fell into its place with a bang that startled the rascals below and brought them to their feet.

Before Birch moved up the short ladder to see what had caused the cover to shut, Billy had it fast, and Birch pushed against it in vain. Now that he had captured the crooks the problem faced the boy—what was he to do in order to get them into the hands of the authorities of the village? He knew nothing about sailing even the smallest boat, therefore it was out of the question for him to unmoor the sloop, get her out of the cove and sail her around to the village water front. To go for assistance, leaving the men shut up in the cabin, would take time, and while he was away the rascals might be able to break out.

If the forward bulkhead was so wobbly as to afford him an avenue of escape from the hold, the after one was likely to yield to the united strength of three desperate men. With this idea in his mind, Billy ran forward and secured the galley scuttle, which worked on the same principle as the cabin one. The hatch over the hold was held down by a barrel, half full of water, which the men themselves had placed upon it after putting the boy down there. While the burglars were hanging away at the cover of the scuttle, Billy was thinking pretty hard.

At last a plan came into his mind. He was not sure whether he could work it or not, but it was worth trying at any rate. The scheme was to try and tow the sloop out of the cove and along close to the shore to the village front by the aid of the rowboat. The sloop seemed light, for she had no cargo aboard; but still it was bound to take time and the expenditure of a lot of muscular energy. Besides, if the men managed to get out while he was doing it the project was likely to be a failure. However, it seemed to be the only solution of the difficulty, and Billy determined to put it into practice.

First, however, he pushed the boom of the mainsail, directly over the cabin hatch and loosened the sheets, or ropes, that supported the ends of it so that the boom sagged down until its

weight rested on the roof of the scuttle. Now, if the cabin bulkhead resisted the efforts of the rascals to break it down they could not possibly get out. He congratulated himself that things seemed to be running his way, and stepping into the boat rowed to the rock around which was secured the sloop's mooring rope. Casting it off he tied the end to the after seat of the boat, and taking his seat on the middle one, got out the oars and began to pull the vessel's head around toward the entrance of the cove.

This gave him no great trouble but when he started to pull the sloop out of the basin against the tide he found that he had his hands full. The greatest difficulty he had to contend with was to get the craft under headway. Once he succeeded in doing that her momentum would help things along. Billy pulled and pulled with great energy. The perspiration oozed down his face for the afternoon was hot. But he stuck to his work like a good fellow, spurred on by the pounding and thumping the burglars were making in their futile efforts to get out of the cabin.

At last he got the sloop moving forward, and in a short time towed her clear of the cove and out into the Sound. He turned toward the village, distant about a mile, and then found that the sloop made better way across the tide than against it, but he soon saw that she was slowly sweeping in toward the rock base of the cliffs where the beach he had tramped nearly three hours before was entirely covered by water. To neutralize this he changed his course to a diagonal one, and thus pulled the vessel away from the shore, but it made his trip longer.

There wasn't a cat-boat in sight now, so there was no chance of getting any assistance. Billy alternately rested and pulled at the oars, drawing nearer and nearer to the village water-front by slow degrees. The crooks had quit their racket, having either come to the conclusion that they were hopelessly imprisoned, or were consulting about some other plan to help themselves out. At last Billy got by the cliffs, and the bath houses, wharf, and other evidences of the end of his laborious job, hove into view.

"I'll bet I've lost several pounds of weight over this thing," he said to himself. "I never worked so hard in my life before; but it's worth it, for the capture of those burglars is sure to create something of a sensation in the neighborhood. And to think I've done it all by myself—one boy against three big men. This is where I get into the limelight. I wouldn't be surprised if the account was printed in the New York papers. Some of the crowd would see it then, and I'd be cock of the walk in my block. I'm almost that now since I got my job in Wall Street. I wonder what time it is? Must be close to five. I hope I won't miss my dinner. Maybe they'll keep some for me, thinking I've got lost."

He resumed rowing again, for he never rested long at a time lest the sloop lose her headway, which would make his work all the harder. The racket in the cabin was resumed. Billy judged that the burglars were trying to batter down the bulkhead between them and the hold. Fearful that they might succeed in getting out, Billy put on a fresh spurt.

Nearer and nearer he drew to the wharf, where a number of boatmen were lounging wait-



ing for dinner patrons. He was noticed pulling the sloop, and the boatmen wondered what was the matter with the craft that she could not come on under her canvas, for there was breeze enough to propel her. It was half-past five when the exhausted boy pulled the boat into the wharf. He jumped aboard the sloop, and then with the mooring line in his hand stepped on to the wharf.

"What's the trouble, young fellow?" asked one of the boatmen, while the others awaited his reply with no little curiosity.

"You mean why have I towed this sloop here?" asked Billy.

"Yes. You look as if you had been having a tough job of it. What's the matter with her that you couldn't sail her?"

"Because I don't know how."

"Don't know how, eh? Hello, who's making all that noise below? You've got that bloom lying across the cabin scuttle. Why didn't you hoist the sheets, and shove the boom over so that whoever is below could get out? I'll do it seeing that you are done up."

"No you won't. Leave the boom alone. I placed it that way on purpose."

"The dickens you did," cried the boatman in surprise. "Why? To keep somebody below for a lark?"

"No lark about it. I've got three burglars down there."

"Three burglars!" chorused the boatmen.

"Yes, and I want somebody to notify the constable to come here and get them."

"Is this a joke?" asked the boatman, suspiciously.

"No it isn't a joke. It's a fact."

"Say, who are you? One of the boarders bound here?"

"No. My name is William West, and I'm stopping over the Fourth with my boss, Broker Benson."

The boatmen were well acquainted with Mr. Benson, and the boy's explanation somewhat altered the complexion of affairs.

"Have you really got three burglars in the cabin of the sloop?"

"I told you I had."

"Are they the chaps the constable and two deputies went out hunting for this morning?" asked another boatman, who had heard something about three crooks being in the neighborhood.

"Yes," replied Billy.

"How did you manage to capture them?" asked the first boatman, evidently astonished that one small boy could accomplish such a feat.

"Oh, I stole a march on them."

"How?"

"I haven't any time to explain now. Will one of you notify the authorities that the burglars are aboard this sloop?"

None of the boatmen seemed desirous of undertaking the mission, for their absence from the wharf was liable to lose them a job. At that moment a village boy appeared on the scene, and he was asked to carry the information to the head constable's house. He had no objection to doing it and started off at once.

"Seeing as you've got to wait till the constable comes you might as well tell us all the particulars," said the boatman.

Billy said he would, and forthwith narrated what had happened the preceding night at Mr. Benson's house, and what had happened to him that afternoon when he went promenading the cliffs.

"So they caught you first?" said the boatman.

"They did, and I guess they wish now they had left me alone."

"You're a pretty smart boy, I guess," said the boatman. "You say Mr. Benson is your boss?"

"Yes."

"What do you do at his office?"

"I'm his messenger."

"What do you have to do in Wall Street?"

Billy explained.

"You ought to get rewarded for catching them burglars."

"Maybe so. I am satisfied with the honor of capturing them."

"It is quite an honor for a boy, I'll admit."

Fortunately the constable had just returned from his fruitless hunt for the crooks when the boy reached his house and gave him Billy's message. The officer was just about to sit down to his dinner, but the message caused him to postpone his meal. He hurriedly got his two deputies together, and provided with revolvers and handcuffs, they started for the wharf. On their arrival Billy told him about his capture of the rascals in as few words as possible, and then the officers set about securing their prisoners.

As the rascals possessed revolvers themselves this might prove a strenuous piece of business, but with the help of the boatmen, whom he pressed into service, the head constable expected to get over it all right. The boom was hoisted out of the way, the scuttle cover was thrown up, and the three rascals ordered to come out and give themselves up. They seemed disposed to resist, but three revolvers were pointed down at them and they gave in. They were marched to the lock-up, and the procession attracted some attention. Billy only went part way with them and then turned off toward Mr. Benson's house, where he arrived to find the family half through dinner.

## CHAPTER XII.—Billy's Deal in O. & H.

"Did you lose your bearings, Billy?" asked Mr. Benson with a smile as his new messenger took his place at the table.

"No, sir. I had my hands full bringing those three burglars who were around here last night to the constable."

The broker and his family looked at him with some surprise.

"Explain yourself, Billy," said Mr. Benson.

"It's quite a story, sir."

"Then wait till you've eaten your dinner," said the broker, as the servant placed a plate of soup before his young guest.

Billy tried to catch up with the family by eating fast, but hardly succeeded. However, they waited at the table till he was through, for it wouldn't have been the proper thing to leave him alone. After topping off with the dessert and coffee, Billy was ready to tell the story of his afternoon's adventures, and the Benson family were curious to learn what he had to tell about



the three burglars. Billy lost no time in beginning his story, and he greatly astonished his audience before he got through.

"Upon my word, you are a wonderful boy," said Mr. Benson, and the others agreed that he certainly was. "And did you recover all the stolen property?"

"I couldn't say, sir. The constable was anxious to get his prisoners to the lock-up and did not waste any time examining the cabin. He left one of his men in charge of the boat, and said that he would be right back to look up the plunder."

"It is probable he will find all the stolen goods on the sloop. The owners of it, when they learn that they are indebted to you for its recovery, will doubtless make up a purse and present it to you," said the broker.

Billy and the family went out on the veranda to enjoy the light breeze that was blowing in from the Sound. It was not yet dark, though the sun had set. Hardly had they got seated when one of the constable's deputies appeared and told Mr. Benson that Billy would be expected to appear at the examination of the prisoners before the justice about ten next morning.

"I won't be able to go to New York by the early train, then," said the boy.

"That won't make any difference, Billy. I guess Mr. Reed can get along without you for a few hours," said the broker.

Before the prisoners were brought before the justice the news of their capture was known all over the village. When Mr. Benson and Billy appeared at the little court-room, where the justice presided when the occasion called for it, they found quite a crowd of spectators. The burglars were brought in and pleaded "Not guilty." Then Billy was called upon to tell the story of their capture, and when he had finished the villagers looked upon him as something of a hero, for his exploit was considered a phenomenal one for a boy. The head constable produced a big pile of valuable plunder, and quite a bunch of money, all of which had been found in the sloop. The owners of it were not yet known, but it was expected that they would come forward and claim their individual property as soon as the capture of the burglars became generally known. The three rascals were held for trial, and were remanded to the county jail in the meantime. Billy had an early lunch and reached the office in Wall Street at about two o'clock. Nobody in the office knew that he had been down to Mr. Benson's summer house to pass the Fourth but he reported the fact to the cashier to account for not turning up at the proper time. On his first errand out he met Bob Brooks and told him where he had been.

"You must be pretty solid with your boss," said Brooks. "Brokers, as a rule, don't invite their messengers to visit at their houses, either in the city or the country. I've been working two years for Mr. Parsons and he hasn't favored me with an invitation like you got. What kind of time did you have?"

"Rather slow for the Fourth, but otherwise bang-up. I had two exciting experiences which I will tell you about later on if I meet you after office hours. So long," and Billy walked off.

When he returned to C—— Street that after-

noon he reached his rooms and got into his everyday clothes before any of his friends saw him. Later on they wanted to know where he had been, and what kind of time he had. He told them the full particulars, and they could hardly believe his statement of the capture of the burglars. The story, however, appeared in the New York papers next morning, and half the Wall Street messengers read it. To say that they were astonished at the exploit of Benson's new boy would be putting it quite mild. Billy made a whole lot of new friends on the strength of it. He received a letter from every one of the people whose property he was the means of restoring and most of them contained a check. The total amount of these checks footed up \$500, and he gave his mother another \$100 to put in the bank for herself. It was about this time that some operators decided to take advantage of the sleepy market to attempt a corner in O. & H. stock. Billy noticed that a lot of the shares were sold day after day, and it struck him that there was something in the wind. He decided to invest the bulk of his capital in 60 shares of it at 90, and see how he would come out. He had hardly made the deal before O. & H. began to rise at a steady pace. O. & H. reached par before the brokers woke up to the fact that there was something doing. They came rushing in from their summer places, and for several days there were high old times in Wall Street. The stock boomed up to 112, at which price Billy sold out, realizing a profit of about \$1,300, which made him worth close to \$2,000. He said nothing to anybody but his mother about his success.

"I'm kind of whooping things up in Wall Street, ain't I, mother?" he said gleefully after he had imparted the good news to her.

"I don't understand how you have been able to make so much money," she said.

"It's my luck." When a fellow is fortunate everything comes his way. It was the greatest thing that ever happened to me to get that job at Benson's. He's a fine boss to work for."

"I should think he was when he presented you with a nice suit of clothes and those other things you got at the store."

"I've been doing my best to please him, and he appreciates it."

That evening he met Millie on the stairs and he asked her how she was getting along at her new place.

"Very well, indeed," she answered.

"I haven't heard any racket in your apartments yet. I guess the O'Briens haven't recovered from the shock of their fall down stairs. I've heard several of the tenants remark that the house seems different since the accident."

"Mrs. O'Brien is greatly changed," said the girl. "Not only in appearance but otherwise. She doesn't fight at all any more, and Mr. O'Brien seems changed, too. I haven't had any trouble with either of them since they came home from the hospital."

"I'm glad to hear it. They certainly did handle you without gloves, particularly Mr. O'Brien. You're running in luck like myself."

"It is quite a relief to me to be let alone."

"I should say so. It used to make me as mad as a hornet to see the way you were knocked around. I hope you've seen the last of that."



"I hope so too," replied the girl, but she did not seem to be very confident about it. Billy told her that he was getting on first rate in Wall Street and was making extra money besides his wages, on the side, but he did not tell her how much he had made so far nor how he had made it.

"I'm glad to hear it, Billy. I'm sure you deserve all the good fortune that comes your way," said Millie, and there was no doubt that she meant it.

"Thanks, Millie. Now run along. I'm going down to see the boys," and Billy continued on his way downstairs.

### CHAPTER XIII.—A Valuable Find.

After the boom in O. & H. was over the market went to sleep again and the brokers passed most of their time out of town with their families. Billy and the other messengers were having a somewhat easy time of it and were taking advantage of the fact, for they knew it would not last long. One morning as Billy was walking leisurely down Broad Street with an envelope in his hand two boys came along and saw him. They were the same pair who had "initiated" him on New Street, as mentioned in our opening chapter.

"There's Benson's new boy," remarked the smaller of the two, whose name was Carter, pointing.

"You bump into him, accidental like, and I'll snatch his envelope and give him a run down the street," said the other with a grin of anticipated fun.

The street was pretty clear that day and offered a good field for a chase. The boy named Carter was ripe for any kind of mischief and he agreed to do as his companion suggested. They both sneaked up behind Billy, and as Carter gave him a thump in the back as he pretended to stumble, the other boy, known as Jenkins, snatched the envelope and made off like a shot. Billy was in the act of turning on Carter when he felt the envelope go. He saw Jenkins, whom he recognized, making off with it. That was enough for him. Paying no attention to the boy who had struck him, he darted after Jenkins at a pace that made some of the passersby look after him. Jenkins had no intention of doing Billy out of his note. His object was to tantalize him and make him mad. Billy came up with him so fast that to save himself he had to run around an Italian apple vender's push cart. Billy followed, but Jenkins was pretty active and managed to elude him by keeping the cart between them. After circling the wagon three times Billy stopped and so did Jenkins.

"What do you mean by snatching that note from me?" demanded Billy. "Hand it over."

"Come and take it away from me," replied Jenkins with a grin.

"If I catch you I'll make you look two ways for Sunday," replied Billy, looking hot and impatient.

"Well, why don't you catch me?" jested the other tantalizingly, holding up the envelope and making a bluff to tear it open.

"Don't you dare open that!" roared Billy, making another dive at him.

At that moment Carter slipped up and gave him a sudden shove which sent him staggering against the vender's cart.

Over went the cart and Billy went sprawling on top of it. Jenkins roared with mirth, flung the envelope in Billy's face and then he and Carter ran off as fast as they could, disappearing up Beaver Street, leaving Billy to square things with the furious Italian. It happened that the Italian had seen Carter push Billy, and he knew it wasn't wholly his fault that the cart was overturned. Still he judged that the boy was of the same stripe as the others, and he seized him and demanded that he help pick up his fruit and pay for any that was spoiled. As the easiest way out of the trouble Billy agreed to do that. He helped the man to right his cart and recover his apples. None of the apples were hurt, and no other boys being around at the moment, the Italian lost none of his property, but he wanted ten cents to pay him for the trouble of sorting his stock out again and polishing some of them up. Billy paid up and then crossed over to the Mills Building, where he was bound.

"Those chaps are looking for trouble, and they'll get it," muttered the young messenger. "I won't do a thing to that biggest fellow when I catch him. He's too funny altogether and needs a dressing down."

Billy delivered his message to the cashier of the office he entered.

"Take it in to Mr. Hooley. He's in his office," said the cashier, handing him back the note.

Billy knocked at the door of the private room and was told to enter. He did so. Hooley read the note.

"Wait a moment," he said, getting up and going outside.

While he was out Billy happened to look on his desk and saw a memorandum lying there, and he took in the few words on it before he thought that he was reading something not intended for his eyes. This is what he read:

"Hooley: Begin at once and buy all the S. & T. you can get till I tell you to stop. Yours, Daly."

Billy recognized Daly as one of the biggest operators in the Street, who had made loads of money in corners and other big financial transactions. In a few minutes Hooley returned and handed Billy a small flat package to take back to his office, and the boy departed.

"I believe I've got hold of a good tip," thought Billy as he hurried along the corridor toward the elevator. "Daly wouldn't order Hooley to buy a lot of S. & T. unless he expected to make a good thing of it, and the only way I see he can do that is through a rise in the price. I'll put Bob Brooks on to this. I owe him for the tip he gave me some time ago and which gave me my first boost."

He met Brooks about half-past twelve at a quick-lunch house.

"Say, Bob, I've got hold of a good tip, and I want to let you in on it," he said.

"Let's have it," said Brooks expectantly.

"Wait till we get outside," replied Billy, beginning on his meat stew.

Twenty minutes later they were on the street.

"Now what's your tip?" asked Brooks.



Billy told him about the memorandum he had seen on Broker Hooley's desk.

"Looks good, doesn't it?" he said.

"First class. I'm on. We'll make a haul out of this that we can blow in on our vacation next month," said Brooks. "I'll meet you after business hours and we'll go up to the little bank together."

"All right," said Billy, who then told him about the trick that Jenkins and Carter had played on him. "It cost me a dime and a lot of time, but I'm going to get square with those fellows. This is the second piece of funny business they've worked off on me."

At that moment they reached Exchange Place and Billy spotted Jenkins and Carter walking slowly up toward New Street.

"There they are now," said Billy. "Know them?"

"Yes. The big fellow is Jenkins and the other is Carter. They work for two brokers in the Vanderpool Building."

"You grab Carter and hold him while I have it out with the other."

They slipped silently up behind the unsuspecting youths, and before either was aware that there was trouble in the air they were grabbed and held fast.

"I've got you at last, you lobster," said Billy, whirling Jenkins around. "You think you can have things all your own way with me, don't you?"

"Leave me alone!" snarled Jenkins.

"After I'm through with you. Why did you snatch that envelope out of my hand this morning eh?"

"Just for a lark."

"Well, you had your lark. Now you've got to pay the piper."

Billy slapped him on both cheeks twice and then tripped him into the gutter.

"I'll get square with you for this," roared Jenkins.

He looked around for something to throw at Billy. A muddy-looking bundle of paper lay in the gutter within his reach. He snatched it up and threw it in Billy's face. Billy caught it and started after him, intending to wipe his face with it. Jenkins, however, was fast enough on his feet to escape into the Vanderpool Building, and Billy had to let him go. He was about to toss the papers into the street when it struck him that something was wrapped in the paper. He examined the bundle and soon saw that there was something. To his surprise there were ten negotiable Boston City five per cent, gilt-edged bonds. He shoved the bonds in his pocket and walked back to the spot where Brooks was holding on to Carter, in spite of the lad's protests.

"Now what have you got to say for yourself?" asked Billy, looking at him.

"Nothin'," answered Carter sourly.

"You shoved me against that Italian's apple cart, and I had to pick his apples up and pay him ten cents into the bargain. Shell out the dime and I'll call it square."

"Ain't got no dime," responded Carter in a sulky tone.

"Then you'll have to take a licking."

"If you hit me I'll have you pulled in. There's a cop coming now."

Billy didn't see any policeman coming

"Come up with ten cents or I'll smack your cheeks like I did your friend's."

He made a bluff to do it and Carter struggled to escape from the grasp that Brooks had on his arm.

"Let go of him, Bob," said Billy, grabbing Carter himself. "Fish up that coin, and be quick about it."

"I'll have you pinched for robbin' me!" cried Carter.

Billy whirled him around, seized him by the coat collar and trousers and ran him up to the entrance of the Vanderpool Building.

"Now go to work," he said, giving him a shove that sent him rolling on the floor, after which he rejoined Brooks.

Then as they walked down to Broad Street he showed the Boston City bonds to his companion and told him how they came into his possession.

"Say, you're the luckiest chap going," said Brooks. "Those are the bonds that I saw advertised for in yesterday's paper."

"That so?" said Billy eagerly. "What paper?"

Brooks told him.

"Five hundred dollars was offered for their return," he said.

"Is that a fact?"

"Sure as you live. Look up yesterday's issue and get the address. It's a law office on Broadway. No. 115, I think. Take them to the man and collar the reward."

"I'll do it," said Billy promptly. "Just think of Jenkins putting me in the way of making \$500. He'd have a fit if he knew that he let such a snap slip out of his fingers. I'd like him to hear about it. I couldn't get better revenge on him."

"I'll see that he hears about it. I know several of his friends and I'll tell them," said Brooks.

That afternoon Billy got hold of the paper which printed the notice referred to by Brooks and saw that he really had the bonds that were advertised for. He looked the lawyer's 'phone number up in the telephone book and connected with his office. A clerk answered him and he asked if Lawyer Howe was in.

"No. He'll be here about four o'clock," was the reply.

"Tell him I'll be over at that hour with the Boston City bonds he advertised for," said Billy.

"You found them? What's your name and address?"

"William West. I'm a Wall Street messenger. Good-by," and Billy rang off.

At four o'clock he entered Lawyer Howe's office on one of the upper floors of 115 Broadway. The lawyer was waiting for him.

"Where did you find the bonds?" asked the lawyer, after Billy had introduced himself and laid the securities on his desk.

Billy explained the odd way in which he had got hold of them. The broker smiled.

"You were lucky. That other lad lost \$500 by not looking at what he picked up. Here is my check for that amount, made out in your name. It's quite a windfall for you."

"Thank you, sir. I'll put it to good use," replied Billy.

He got up, bowed and departed.



## CHAPTER XIV.—Billy Creates a Sensation.

Before calling on Lawyer Howe, Billy had visited the little bank with Brooks and put in his order for 150 shares of S. & T. on margin at 85. Brooks was surprised at the size of his deal.

"Where did you get all that money, Billy? Been making it on some deal you never told me about?"

"Yes, I made \$1,300 out of the boom in O. & H. the other day, and I got \$500 from the people whose property I recovered when I captured the three burglars down at Nansook."

"Why didn't you put me onto O. & H.?"

"I didn't have any tip. I noticed by the stock report that a lot of the shares were changing hands, and I had an idea that meant something, so I took a chance on it, and made a profit of \$22 a share on 60 shares."

They separated at Broadway and then Billy went to the lawyer's. When his mother came in that evening, hot and tired, Billy was waiting to see her.

"Mother, you look done up. Working these hot afternoons is too much for you. What you need is a vacation."

"I wish I could afford to take one," she said, wistfully.

"There's no reason why you shouldn't. Next Monday is the first of August. Here's a hundred dollars. Take it and go down to Coney Island and board there for a month."

"I'd rather save the money."

"That's all nonsense. You've got \$200 in the bank now, and I'm worth over \$2,000 in cash. I had another lucky thing happen me to-day, and I made \$500 out of it. I got hold of a number of bonds that had been lost, and captured the reward offered for their return."

He told his mother about the incident. The result of the conversation was that Mrs. West agreed to arrange to take a month's vacation during August. Next morning Billy bought fifty more shares of S. & T., making 200 in all. During the week that followed S. & T. advanced slowly to 88. Next day the price went up to 95 in an hour, taking Wall Street by surprise. The scene of the O. & H. boom were repeated, and there was lots of excitement and wilted collars in the Exchange for the rest of the week. Brooks sold out on Friday at \$17 a share.

Billy held on till next day and collared \$20 profit, clearing \$4,000. This success raised his capital to \$6,300, and he felt like a rich boy. He went down to Coney Island that afternoon to spend Sunday with his mother. Of course the first news he had to tell her was that he had made another bunch of money in the Wall Street market.

When he told her how much he had cleared she held up her hands in astonishment.

"Billy West, you're the luckiest boy in the world," she said.

"I guess I am, mother. I'm worth over \$6,000 now."

"Why, that's a fortune."

"Yes, mother, to us."

"What are you going to do with it all?"

"Use it to make more money with."

"I hope you won't lose any of it."

"I'll try not to. If you'll give me your bank-

book I'll put in \$300 more for you. Then you'll be worth \$500."

"I'll let you have it when I go away Monday morning," she said.

"All right."

During the week he was served with a notice to appear at the town where the three burglars were to be tried and testify against them. He obeyed the order, of course, and the crooks were convicted and got long sentences in the State prison. On the Saturday of that week Mr. Benson came to town, and before he left he told Billy he could take the next week off as a vacation. There wasn't much doing, so he could get off just as well as not. Billy thanked his employer, and put the week in at Coney Island with his mother. His vacation ended on the last day of August and with the first of September the brokers began to come back to the city with their families.

It was fully two weeks later before Wall Street took on its accustomed look. One day Mr. Benson sent Billy to an office with a message, but when he reached the place the trader was very busy and could not be disturbed. There were three brokers standing together in the room waiting to see him, and Billy took up his position near them. They were talking about a syndicate that had been formed to corner M. & N. shares, and the boy heard all about it. Suddenly one of the traders noticed his presence, and asked him in an angry tone if he had been listening to their conversation.

Before he could reply the door of the private room opened and the man who had been engaged with the broker came out.

Billy took advantage of the chance to run in and deliver his note. There was no answer and he came out right away. The trader who had spoken to him was waiting for him and made a grab at his arm. Billy eluded his clutch and ran out of the office. As the floor was up only one flight Billy didn't stop to take the elevator, but ran down the stairs. The trader didn't stop, but kept on after him. He was pretty active and evidently had made up his mind to catch the boy and get an explanation from him. There was a tall office building before the boy. To escape his angry pursuer he began to climb up the face of the building. There were big joints between the stones and he got his hands and feet in the openings, and began to work his way upward. A crowd of passers-by stopped and began to watch him, and wonder what he was trying to do. Billy, who had attempted the feat more out of bravado than anything else, kept on ascending, like a fly on a wall, till he reached the broad cornice under the second story windows. Getting up on it he sat down, with his legs swinging in the air and grinned down at his discomfited pursuer and the inquisitive and curious crowd. The sight naturally drew others, and especially all the messenger boys who were in that neighborhood. Before many minutes a tremendous mob was gathered in front of the building all looking up at the unconcerned Billy. He enjoyed the sensation he was creating hugely. Brokers, clerks and visitors in the building were soon attracted to the windows, and they wondered what the excitement was about. Those on the upper floor looked down, but only a few could see the boy sitting on the ledge, apparently as contented as a clam at high



water. Naturally the gathering of such a crowd brought several policemen to the spot, and they wanted to know what was the matter. No one could tell them. All they could do was to point at the boy. They soon learned that he had climbed up there. A number of messengers recognized Billy.

"That's Benson's new boy," they told each other, and they began to call out to him.

Noticing that the policemen were pushing toward the entrance of the building, Billy surmised that they intended to come up to the second floor and take him in. He decided that he wouldn't trouble them. They might arrest him for attracting crowd and blocking the sidewalk. Such a thing is against the law, and Billy knew it. Accordingly he stood up, made several polite bows to the crowd, who began to entertain a suspicion of his sanity, and then climbing up a step or two further, made his way into the corner office through the open window, looking as chipper as any boy who felt satisfied with himself.

#### CHAPTER XV.—Conclusion.

The clerks in the office looked at him in surprise as he passed through and out at the door. He never said a word, but walked with dignity and composure. Two policemen were getting out of the elevator, and he turned his face away lest they should recognize him. They hurried into the corner office, and Billy hastened downstairs, and was presently pushing his way through the crowd. He looked up and saw the two policemen looking out of the corner window.

Just then he was joined by Bob Brooks.

"What's the excitement, Billy?" he asked.

"A boy climbed up the face of that building to the ledge of the second story and sat there making faces at the crowd," responded Billy.

"Where did he go?"

"He went in at that corner window."

"I see two cops up there."

"They're looking for him."

"I wonder who he was?"

"I believe he was Benson's new boy."

"Go on. What are you giving me?"

"The truth. I'll tell you how it was," and Billy proceeded to tell Brooks how he was chased out of the office building across the street by an irate broker hot after his scalp, and how he had crawled up the side of the granite corner building to get away from him and cut a lark at the same time.

"Gee! You're a corker, you are. This will be in the papers."

"What do I care?"

"Benson may not like it."

"Oh, I'll explain matters to him. That broker had no right to chase me and threaten me with his umbrella. I had a perfect right to try and get away from him the best way I could. There is no reason why I should get into trouble. I didn't ask people to stop and stare at me."

Billy returned to the office, and the cashier asked him what had kept him out so long.

"There was some excitement down on Broad street, sir."

"What was it about?"

"About a boy who had climbed up the outside of one of the buildings to get away from an angry broker."

"Mr. Benson is waiting for you. Hurry inside."

Billy did so, and before he came out he had told his story to the broker. Benson laughed heartily at his messenger's adventure, but told him he was likely to hear more from it, as the police would probably learn his identity. They did, for one of the messenger boys gave him away. Billy was out on an errand when two of them appeared in the office. Mr. Benson saw them, and squared things for the boy. Subsequently a reporter was up after material to round out his story, and Billy gave him a few points. The broker who had chased Billy didn't laugh, however. He was very angry. He called on Benson and complained about Billy.

"Oh, I guess the boy didn't hear anything you and your friends said," replied Mr. Benson. "If he did he won't say anything about it. He's a good and reliable boy, I assure you. He's only been with me about three months, but I have perfect confidence in him."

Billy took advantage of the pointer, however, and bought 500 shares of M. & N. stock. He also gave Brooks the hint to get in on it, too. Three weeks later Billy sold out at a profit of a little over \$17 a share, making \$8,700 altogether. We wish we had space to detail more of Billy West's experiences in Wall Street. He was a live boy and kept everybody else alive who had anything to do with him, without getting down to any foolish tricks. He continued to make money in Wall Street as time passed and he learned the ropes better. He hired a snug little flat uptown and furnished it up to suit his mother. It was about this time that Mrs. O'Brien unexpectedly came into some property in Ireland, and she and her husband decided to cross the ocean with their children and take possession of it. They told Millie that she could go and live with Mrs. West, who seemed anxious to have her for company, and matters to that effect were soon arranged, greatly to Billy's delight, for he thought a whole lot of Millie. To-day Billy West (West isn't his name, by the way), is a well-known broker in Wall Street, and is worth quite a comfortable fortune, all made out of the market and his customers. The lady who presides over his home was once Millie Sackett. When he gave me the foregoing facts, with others, to be used in this story, he told me that it made him feel like a boy again to go over his youthful experiences, particularly that part when he began life in Wall Street as Benson's new boy.

Next week's issue will contain "DRIVEN TO WORK; OR, A FORTUNE FROM A SHOE-STRING."



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# Ninety Degrees South

or, Lost in the Land of Ice

By GASTON GARNE

(A Serial Story.)

## CHAPTER XIV.

### The Loss of a Home.

He must save his life and Sadie's at all hazards.

He sprang to the outer door, found it locked, seized a hammer and in an instant shivered the glass in the door to atoms.

He quickly made his escape through the aperture, and raced along the passage and to the upper deck, shouting a warning to all who might be within sound of his voice:

"Run for your lives! The ship will blow up!"

Reaching the saloon-deck, Phil called Sadie's name in his loudest voice, and then ran to her room.

"Sadie!" he cried, "where are you? Make haste as you value your life!"

The girl came from her room white and trembling, when, without waiting to give a single word of explanation, Phil seized her and hurried outside.

"Quick!" he cried, setting her on her feet and hurrying forward. "The vessel may blow up at any instant."

There was a companion-ladder amidships, leading down to the ice, and Phil hurried Sadie down this, following close behind.

"Quick!" he gasped, as he reached the ice and seized the girl's hand. "There is no knowing how soon the ship may be blown up."

They fairly raced over the ice, Sadie asking no questions, but trusted implicitly to her companion.

"If the engine had not been of the best, the boiler would have exploded before now," muttered Phil, as they reached the rocks.

"What is the matter?" asked Sadie. "Could nothing be done?"

As she spoke there came a tremendous booming sound, the blackness was rent by a fierce tongue of flame and white vapor, which seemed to shoot up straight to the very heavens, and the air was shaken by a most terrific explosion.

For a moment the sky all around was lighted up, and by the glare one could see great dark objects hurled into the air and falling at a great distance.

"What is the matter? What has happened?" asked Sadie, when the sound of the explosion had ceased to echo from the cliffs.

"The boilers have blown up. Wills put on all the pressure and closed all the valves. I could not get at them to open them, and if I had remained I would have lost my life."

"And so you came to warn me, to save me?"

"Yes

"But where is Wills? Has he perished?"

"I don't know. I have not seen him."

"And the man would blow up the ship to kill you? He must be mad!"

"I fear he is. He had all the looks of a maniac. I never saw such an expression on a human face, and I hope that I never shall again. The man was like a fiend, and his look haunts me yet."

"Then he may have lost his life in the explosion. Can you tell how much of the vessel still remains?"

"No, not yet; it is too dark. I am afraid, however, that we will not be able to patch it up so as to float it."

"I wasn't thinking of that so much as of our being able to live on it till we can get away from here."

"Yes, it is quite likely that there is enough of her left to form a shelter. All the midship section is probably blown out, but it is likely that the after-quarters are still in good condition."

"Suppose we go and investigate?" said Sadie. "There must be some portion of it habitable."

They had taken but a few steps, when Phil suddenly stopped, pointed to the wreck and said:

"Look there! I am afraid we have no home on board the brave old ship, after all."

"What's the matter?" asked Sadie.

"Don't you see the portholes all lighted up?"

"Yes, of course, but what is there in that?"

Before Phil could reply tongue of flame sprang up from the deck, and in a few moments the wreck could be plainly seen in the firelight.

"The flames will sweep right through her from end to end," said Phil. "The explosion has scattered the fire in the furnaces. The coal will burn, the woodwork will ignite, and there is food sufficient for the flame to make fire enough to consume the whole interior of the vessel."

Even as he was speaking they saw flames burst from the side, amidships, and could see plainly that the section where the engine-room had been was now a raging furnace.

Even at the distance they stood they could feel the heat, and they could well realize that, with a strong wind and with all the draught there was, it would soon grow much more intense.

"We might get aboard by the after-companion ladders," said Phil, "and try and save something before the flames reach the cabin. There are the instruments, the compass and the charts. We must save them."

"Let's try, at any rate," answered Sadie, hurrying on at the boy's side.

There was light enough to show them the way, and the heat increased perceptibly as they hurried forward.

Suddenly a snapping, crackling sound was heard, several times repeated at short intervals.

"Is that the ice?" asked Sadie.

"No, it is the glass covering of the port-holes," said Phil. "The heat has cracked them. See, the flames are rushing out at the portholes now."

It was even so, and as they came in line with the after portholes they saw the flames pouring from them also.

"I am afraid that our chance of finding shelter in any part of the wreck are getting very slim," said Phil. "There'll be nothing but the hull left, and that will be so warped and twisted by the



heat that I doubt if it will hold together, and then there is another thing."

"What is that?" asked Sadie, Phil having paused.

The heat will melt the ice around the hull, the water will come in, and it will be only a question of time when she sinks."

"And can nothing be done?" asked Sadie anxiously.

"I am afraid not," said Phil, and at that moment there was a sharp sound like the report of a pistol, followed by three or four similar sounds in quick succession.

"The ice is cracking under the fierce heat," exclaimed the boy. "Quick, we must reach the bluffs. We do not know what may happen next."

Even then there was another report, and they saw the ice crack not far from them, the water spurting up to a considerable height.

They might be cut off from the shore if the cracking continued, and delays were dangerous.

Phil seized Sadie's hand and the two raced across the ice toward the pass between the bluffs at full speed, not knowing how soon their retreat might be cut off.

Suddenly a crack opened right across their path, but, with an encouraging cry to his companion, Phil prepared to make the leap.

The crack was not more than three or four feet wide, and was thrown into full view by the flames from the burning vessel.

"Now!" cried Phil, and they both took the leap, hand in hand, and landed safely on the opposite shore and raced on as the crack increased to seven or eight feet in width, and the hissing water spurting in all directions.

The cracks increased, great blocks of ice were ground to powder in an instant, the escaping water hissed and surged and dashed high into the air, the light from the fire, now increasing in brilliance, shining full upon one of the strangest sights that Phil had ever witnessed.

They reached the shore none too soon, and sought a sheltered nook in the pass where they could see the light from the fire, but were protected from the wind which they could hear blowing a gale just beyond.

"The wind has come up since the flames started and will only increase them," muttered Phil. "We have now no home but the caves."

"Yes, and I'll drive you out of even them," hissed a voice, and Phil saw the evil-minded Wills standing not ten feet away and glaring at him with a look of the most intense hate.

## CHAPTER XV.

### The Return of Captain Essex.

Pointing to the light of the fire, Phil said, sternly:

"That is your work, Wills. Your insane hate has cost the loss of the ship perhaps, also the means of getting out of this desolate land. You have caused suffering to all, yourself included, and all on account of your unreasonable hate."

"You needn't worry about me," sneered Wills. "I will get out of this all right. You won't,

though. I have sworn to get rid of you, and I mean to do it."

As the man advanced upon him, Phil sprang suddenly forward so as to protect Sadie, seized Wills and grappled with him.

They struggled by the fierce glare from the burning wreck, being now at a point where they could see it plainly.

For a long time neither appeared to get the advantage, but at last Phil felt his strength lessening, and knew that unless help came the villain would get the better of him.

Suddenly exerting all his remaining strength, he threw the man from him and staggered back, panting and breathless.

In another moment Wills would have been upon him, but in that instant the intense brilliancy all around him was succeeded by a darkness so black that it made one's eyeballs ache.

It was impossible to see anything, the change was so sudden, although Phil realized in a short time it might be possible to see dimly, after his eyes became accustomed to the difference.

It was easy to account for the change from dazzling light to pitchy darkness, for there was only one explanation.

The intense, blistering, furnace-like heat of the fire had so melted and cracked the ice all around that the vessel had suddenly sunk, putting out the fire, causing volumes of steam to arise and agitating the water as if by a submarine volcano.

There was a terrible rumbling and boiling sound, accompanied by the noise of splintering ice, and the fall of condensed vapor in a heavy rain all around them.

Phil flew back quickly and felt his hand suddenly grasped by another, the friendly pressure of which assured him that it was Sadie who had come to his help.

In a few moments he found himself in some dark, warm place, out of the wind, where the only sound he heard was his own and Sadie's breathing, and where the darkness was absolutely impenetrable.

During the absence of Captain Essex they had frequently gone ashore, and had found numerous openings in the bluffs, some of them being caves of considerable size, and it was in one of these, he judged, that he now found himself.

For a long time he remained in silence, leaning against the rocky walls, till at length, failing to hear anything but his own breathing, he whispered:

"Are you here, Sadie?"

"Yes."

"Have you heard or seen anything of Wills?"

"No, and I do not think he will find this place, but I think it is as well to make no sound. Lie down and rest yourself. I will arouse you if I hear anything."

Phil sat on the floor, with his back to the wall, but did not fall asleep for two hours, when, hearing no sound, he gradually allowed slumber to come upon him.

Some hours later they went out, finding that the moon was shining brightly, the smoke had all cleared, and there was little or no wind.

(To be Continued)



# Fame and Fortune Weekly

NEW YORK, JANUARY 6, 1928

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## INTERESTING ARTICLES

### STUART PORTRAIT FOUND

Gilbert Stuart's portrait of Thomas Jefferson, after having remained in possession of some member of the Jefferson family since it was painted, 160 years ago, has been bought for an American collector at a price said to be the highest ever paid for any of Stuart's portraits.

The news was given out recently by E. C. Brebeck, art dealer, on a cable message from his agent in London, who said he had the picture and was on his way home with it. It was found in Scotland.

### MORE WARS ARE LIKELY, LORD ALLENBY BELIEVES

War dangers have not yet disappeared, declared Field Marshall Lord Allenby at a reunion of the Royal Bucks Hussars. The cavalry was threatened with extinction, he said, but it had not died yet.

"Whatever the pacifists may say, we are not yet done with fighting," Lord Allenby asserted. "The last war was one to end war, and let us hope it has done so, but it is very likely that it has not."

"If we have another war there will be countries in which tanks and airplanes cannot win victory. I don't want to detract from the splendid work of the infantry, but they must have cavalry to help them."

### THRIFT SOBERS PARIS; FEW GO TO GAY PLACES

French purse-strings, which have hung loose since days immediately after the World War, are again pulled together tightly.

Spending, particularly on little things and on minor amusements, has sunk lower this winter than in any previous one since 1919, according to merchants and amusement purveyors. Simultaneously the tourist population here has dropped sharply.

Large cafes along the "Grand Boulevards,"

usually crowded when the weather drives clients from outdoor terraces, are almost deserted, while the ordinarily gay Montmartre tourists haunts are so empty that in some of them orchestras take quarter-hour intermissions between dances.

### URGE IMMIGRATION CHANGE

Before the days of restricted immigration, quota laws and passports, some immigrants arrived in America—without, in this case, passing through Ellis Island. Having established immigration precedent here, they left to their kin establishment of the General Society of Mayflower Descendants.

"If it be advisable to amend the Immigration Act of 1924," said the society recently in an official statement, "to allow the family of an immigrant or a descendant of a citizen of the United States to enter the United States," the society recommends that such a family be given precedence in the quota without increasing the quota itself.

### BUDDHIST PAGODA HIT BY QUAKE IN BURMA

A widespread earthquake in Burma of ten seconds' duration is reported in an Exchange Telegraph despatch from Bangoon. The central pagoda in Bangoon, an object of veneration by thousands of Buddhists, was badly cracked. It is feared loss of life may have occurred in the outlying districts.

(Rangoon is dominated by the great golden pile of the Shwe Dagon pagoda, the centre of Burmese religious life, the most venerable and the most universally visited of all places of worship in Indo-China. Its peculiar sanctity is due to the fact that it is the only pagoda credited with containing actual relics of Guatama, and the three Buddhas who preceded him in this world. It is 368 feet high and towers above the city on a hill itself 168 feet above the city level. The huge structure is covered with pure gold and once in every generation this gold is renewed by public subscription.)

### COMET STILL FAILS TO KEEP ITS DATE HERE

The mysterious comet due to appear in the Northern Hemisphere after sundown is still behind schedule.

When it failed to show up as expected, observers thought it might be obscured by the smoky haze over the city. That was not the case. Prof. Frank Schlessinger of the Yale Observatory informed The World that the comet has not yet arrived. It may be visible, he said, although he inclines to the belief that it will not appear until later.

"The orbit of the comet was computed from three days of observation in the Southern Hemisphere," said Dr. Schlessinger. "Three days are not enough time for making accurate calculations. It is impossible to say just when it will appear, but it should be here in a day or two, and we are constantly on the lookout for it."

According to Dr. Schlessinger the comet will probably be the brightest since 1910, when Halley's Comet swept its brilliant tail across the skies.



# A Strange Adventure

By Colonel Ralph Fenton

"I suppose I am eccentric," said Dick Clavering; "at least, they tell me so; at any rate, there's a story about that, if you care to hear it."

"Go on—go on!" was the unanimous vote.

Dick settled himself comfortably—that is to say, threw himself back in his chair, and one leg over the back of another.

"It was a queer thing to do," he began.

"What was?" asked Swisher.

"That will be made," said Dick, "but I suppose he was eccentric, too."

"You forget that you haven't told us who he was," said the president.

"Well, I can't say I knew him myself," returned Dick, "though I was his distant relation—he had none but distant relations, in fact, of whom I was most distant. It was for that reason, perhaps, or maybe because having never seen me, he disliked me less than the others, that he left me all his wealth."

Dick had a way of beginning a story in the middle and working it both ways, that wasn't likely to be bettered by asking questions. So, without further interruption, they allowed him to proceed on his own plan.

"The cut-off relations, you may be sure," he continued, "looked upon my good fortune with anything but equanimity. They considered me a supplanter, a sort of testamentary usurper, in short, who had robbed them of their rights."

"Those nearest in blood tried to break the will. The testator, they said, wasn't in his right mind when he made it, and proofs were brought up of many queer things he had said and done. But the jury thought a man could be queer without being crazy, and so found a verdict establishing the disputed document."

"Of course I was hated worse than ever by the disappointed claimants; but their spite gave me small concern. With a light heart and plenty of money, a man is apt to be on good terms with himself, and not to mind much what other people think."

"I went to spend a summer in the mountains. At an old-fashioned country seat, half hotel and half farmhouse, I found comfortable quarters and pleasant companions—among the latter a couple of half-fledged doctors, in whom the pranks and vagaries into which the exuberance of spirits often led me, seemed to excite a lively interest. They were constantly seeking to draw me out. They seemed to think me amusing, to find entertainment in my freaks; and to gratify them I was ever ready with some new extravagance."

"One evening they invited me to take a ride with them to visit a friend in the neighborhood, a 'brother chip,' they said, with whom they assured me I would be delighted."

"It was a long jaunt over a wild mountain road, but we chatted the time away, and at length, as the light began to fall, drew up before a large stone building."

"This is Dr. Crotchett's," said one of my companions.

"As we alighted and ascended the steps, the

doctor came to the door. He received us cordially, and the ceremony of introduction over, led the way in. He was a tall, lank man, with a shrewd, cunning face, clothed with one of those perpetual smiles which it would be a relief to see broken now and then by a frown.

"Show Mr. Clavering up, Leech," he said to one of my friends; "you know the way, and I have a word or two to say to my brother Pellett here."

"Leech took my arm, and at the end of a long hallway on the third floor, led me into a dimly lighted room. I thought it a strange place to conduct a guest to, but made no remark."

"Be seated," said Leech. "I shall return in a moment."

"So saying, he stepped out and closed the door."

"Though it was summer the night was cool in that mountain region, and morning and evening fires were customary. Feeling a little chilly after our long ride, I attempted to draw a chair which stood near the wall toward a heating apparatus at one end of the room."

"Judge to my surprise to find the chair immovable. My curiosity was excited. I took a survey of the apartment. The lamp by which it was lighted hung from the ceiling out of reach. The only articles of furniture were the stationary chair, a small iron bedstead and bedding—the former fastened to the wall—and a washstand similarly secured. I examined the window; it was narrow, and guarded outside by thick iron bars."

"What could be the meaning of all this? I began to feel a tremor coming over me. Beads of perspiration stood on my forehead. I ran to the door, essayed to open it, but found it locked from without! I shook it violently, called loudly for Leech, and then made desperate efforts to kick down the door; but it was too strong and heavy, and inspection revealed the fact that it was thickly plated with iron."

"A vague feeling of terror had driven me almost frantic, when a slight, grating noise attracted my attention."

"A portion of the door turned outward, as if upon a hinge, disclosing a small, square aperture, through which I discerned the face of Dr. Crotchett, with his rigid, sickening smile."

"What is the meaning of this?" I demanded, quite fiercely.

"Come, come, Mr. Clavering, be calm," said the doctor, in his smooth, hypocritical tone; "excitement will do you great harm, you see. We trust you'll soon be better."

"Better!" I exclaimed. "Why, there's nothing on earth the matter with me."

"You are scarcely the best judge of that," was the quiet response.

"But I tell you I was never sick in my life," I yelled, driven to frenzy by such insolent mockery.

"Not exactly sick, perhaps," returned the imperturbable doctor, "but you have not been quite yourself lately, you see—not quite—"

"And he tapped his forehead significantly."

"Then you take me to be crazy?" I said, bursting into a laugh at the absurdity of the thing.

"Well, well, if you only keep quiet, and avoid excitement, we hope to bring you around in a month or so."

"I strove to dash my fist in the scoundrel's face,



but the aperture closed suddenly, and I only skinned my knuckles.

"Next morning breakfast was brought by a servant, and passed through the opening.

"This man was coarse and brutal-looking, apparently of the class not usually money-proof.

"There could be no harm in making the trial, at any rate.

"I had a considerable sum about me, and began with an offer sufficient, as I thought, to tempt the man's supidity.

"He rejected it, however, but in such a way as to render it evident he was only holding out for more.

"I was too impatient to haggle.

"Only help me out of this, and I will give you all I have," I said, naming the amount.

"I'll put you in a way of working your own way out," he replied; "that's the best I can do, but it must be a cash-up job."

"Put the means of escape in my hands," I answered, "and that moment the money goes into yours."

"With my next meal my new friend brought a small steel saw and a coil of rope.

"All you have to do," he said, "is to raise the sash and saw through a couple of the iron bars. Then wait till night, and by means of this rope, you may safely reach the ground. It's the longest I could get, but when you reach the end, you'll only have to drop a few feet. Once you're safe off, I'll come in and remove the rope and twist up your sheet, letting it hang out of the window, so that they may think you've done all without help."

"With one hand I received my purchase, and paid the money with the other.

"The little tool worked like magic. In a couple of hours I had sawed nearly through two of the bars, leaving barely enough to hold them in place till night set in.

"I could hardly wait for the darkness, but when it came, it took but a moment to complete the work, remove the bars, adjust the rope, and begin my descent.

"Soon my feet had passed the end.

"I was about to let go my hold, confiding in the servant's word as to the distance remaining. 'But the man may have played me false,' something whispered; 'he may think my death the best security against the discovery of his bribery.'

"I had been unable, while a prisoner, to look out from my window upon the ground, and now all beneath was black darkness.

"For several seconds I heard nothing.

"Then came a sound as of some object, far below, bounding from cliff to cliff.

"With what speed I could I clambered back into my old quarters.

"Soon I heard a step outside."

"I crouched so as to be hidden by the opening of the door.

"Soon as it swung inwards, springing from my concealment, I seized the villain by the throat.

"Make the least noise, and I'll strangle you!" I hissed through my clenched teeth. "Now give me back my money!"

"Don't choke me, and I will," he gasped.

"I relaxed my grasp, and the money was restored.

"Now the key," I demanded.

"It was handed over.

"Springing out of the door, I closed and locked it on my late accomplice.

"I rushed down the stairs and along the passage to the front door.

"Fortunately it was early in the evening, and I found it open, and a few moments saw me on my way home, which I reached in safety."

"But what about the motive of your imprisonment?" asked Farmer Longdale.

"Oh, it was all a put-up job between the doctors and disinherited relations, to enable the latter to get control of my estate. The certificate of two doctors, as the law stood, was enough to get a man locked up as a lunatic, and my good friends, Leech and Pellett, had done me that service. But didn't I make it warm for the whole set by an action for false imprisonment afterwards? To avoid the consequences, they were obliged to leave the country, and I have never heard of them since."

## THE FUGITIVE AURORA BOREALIS FACES AN INTERNATIONAL QUIZ

A campaign more than resolute is now under way to rob the aurora borealis of its secrets. For centuries this strange phenomenon has fired the imagination of scientists and of late years much valuable data have been organized. But a great deal remains to be learned. The effort has now been made international in scope. At a recent meeting of the International Geodetic and Geographic Union, held in Prague, Czechoslovakia, it was decided that the co-operation of all nations should be solicited in the quest of running these beautiful, mysterious and, in certain respects, these mischievous Northern lights to their lair.

Mischievous, yes. The present offensive waged by specialists of many lands is not altogether a matter of scientific curiosity; for in this age of of electrical expansion the Northern Lights represent frequently an inimical force of greater or less potency—principally less, of course, though they can, on occasion, play very queer and sometimes rather disconcerting pranks. Only the other day it was reported that the aurora borealis had been caught upsetting telegraph operations in the United States—charging the wires with excess electricity and making it impossible for a time, over a certain area, to send any messages.

According to N. H. Heck, who was an American delegate to the meeting in Prague, "Dr. Carl Stoermer, famous scientist of Norway, reported interesting experiments in photographing the aurora against stars. Plans were worked out for more effective use of magnetic methods in studying underground formations."

Sir Frederic Stupart of Canada was elected a member for North America to serve on a newly formed international committee whose work it will be to conduct special studies of the aurora borealis. So the campaign is well under way and results may reward this new effort. It is not thought likely, however, that even with international mass formation and the aid of all the resources of modern science this ancient wild spirit of the North can be brought to bay without a prolonged struggle.



## GOOD READING

MANY CITIES HUNT KIDNAPING GANG  
WITH \$700,000 STOLEN DIAMONDS

Police of more than a half dozen cities, with recovery of more than \$700,000 of stolen diamonds as their objective, have joined the Chicago authorities in a search for twenty-two men and women, said to be members of the gang that kidnaped Morris Reismer, St. Paul, Minn., real estate dealer recently.

Eight suspects have been arrested. They and the twenty-two at large are said by police to constitute the most powerful diamond robbery gang in the United States. Simultaneously, it is charged, they carried on kidnaping plots on an extensive scale.

In possession of those still at large, police say, is the nearly \$700,000 of loot, proceeds of robberies in Chicago, New York, Brooklyn, Philadelphia, Detroit, St. Louis, Cleveland and other cities.

Reismer according to the story told after his release was lured to Chicago by a message saying a friend was in trouble. Reismer said he was taken to an apartment where he was kicked, beaten and threatened with death and ordered to raise \$75,000. He carried only a check for \$5,000. Evidently despairing of getting the money, the men released Reismer and he was found last night in a Loop hotel.

WAR ON CANCER: CLINICS IN NEW YORK  
AND MANY OTHER CITIES AID FIGHT  
ON DISEASE

A Nation-wide campaign of education has been inaugurated by the American Society for the Control of Cancer. With the co-operation of physicians and hospitals, provision has been made for examinations that may reveal the presence of the disease in time to check it and thereby reduce the death rate, which is now more than one in ten among the grown population of the United States.

Part of the campaign is the publication of a series of authoritative bulletins, prepared by the society, of which the following is one:

As a means of extending the benefits of skilful diagnosis and treatment to the greatest number of people, cancer clinics are being established in large centres of population. The public is quick to avail itself of these facilities.

The clinics are sometimes brought about in general hospitals with the resources in equipment and personnel which already exist. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts, which is the leader among the States of the Union in carrying on an aggressive crusade against cancer, is co-operating with the medical profession to establish cancer clinics of this kind in all of its principal cities.

Sometimes clinic form a part of institutes especially devoted to cancer.

Among the places where clinics have been notably successful are New York, Boston, Pittsburgh, Washington, Atlanta, Detroit, Columbus, Minneapolis, Denver and St. Louis.

Many years ago, before the modern scientific

methods of diagnosis and treatment had been developed, it was erroneously supposed that no provision was needed for cancer patients beyond general hospitals.

Be examined for cancer at a hospital or by your doctor.

LINCOLN'S KINDNESS TOLD BY FOE'S  
WIDOW

A simple episode revealing the tenderness of Abraham Lincoln and his friendship for the Confederate general, George Pickett, whom he knew as a boy in Quincy, Ill., is retold in *The Illinois State Register* by Thomas Rees, its publisher.

Mr. Rees took his story from a letter written by General Pickett's widow to Charles U. Gordon of Greenville, Miss., declining with regret an invitation to attend a Southern States Republican League celebration at Lincoln's last birthday anniversary.

Describing General Pickett as "one of the greatest and bravest generals of the Confederacy," Mr. Rees declared his widow's letter, "written in her old age, worthy of the wife and widow of a great general and leader of men."

The letter, in part, follows:

"The name of Abraham Lincoln, wherever it may occur, recalls a scene from my window in the old Pickett home at the corner of Sixth and Leigh Streets in Richmond on a day in early April after the surrender of our armies. A carriage passing by my home was surrounded by guards and followed by a retinue of soldiers. After it had passed the cavalcade paused and a man alighted from the carriage and came back to our house. Hearing his knock I opened the door, with my baby in my arms, and saw a tall, gaunt and sad-faced man, who asked:

"Is this George Pickett's place?"

"Yes, sir, but he is not here."

"I know that, ma'am, but I just wanted to see the place. Down in old Quincy, Ill., I have heard the lad describe the home. I am Abraham Lincoln."

"The President," I gasped.

"The stranger shook his head.

"No, ma'am; just Abraham Lincoln, George Pickett's old boyhood friend."

"I am George Pickett's wife and this is his baby."

"I had never seen Mr. Lincoln, but remembered the intense love and reverence with which my soldier husband always spoke of him.

"It had been long since my baby had seen a man, and being reminded of his own father, he reached out his hands to Mr. Lincoln, who took him in his arms, an expression of almost divine love glorifying his face."

"My baby opened his mouth wide and insisted on giving his father's friend a dewy baby kiss. Putting the little one back in my arms, Mr. Lincoln said:

"Tell your father, the rascal, that I forgive him for the sake of that kiss and those bright eyes."—*New York Times*.



## CURRENT NEWS

## REPORT ON METEOR SHOWER

Twelve fireballs instead of one streaked across the New England sky on the night of October 16, the Haryard College Observatory announced recently: a result of an investigation of a bright meteor reported in an Associated Press dispatch from Portland, Me.

From the twenty-one reports received, it was believed that the shower of the twelve stretched obliquely from Eastport, Me., to western Long Island. Eight of them moved northeast by southwest at about 10 p. m.

One was observed passing with its long tail from horizon to horizon at Dennysville, Me.; Cambridge, Mass.; Thompson, Conn., and Danielson, Conn. It ended above the southwest horizon of Seaford, L. I. The observed path was nearly overhead at these points but half of it was over the Gulf of Maine.

The air distance traversed by that meteor was 430 miles or more but it was far from a record. The meteor of July 20, 1860, went over Lake Michigan and Long Island, while the group of February 9, 1913, went from Saskatchewan to the south Atlantic off Cape Palmas.

## INVESTIGATION HAS MADE BIBLE STRONGER, BISHOP MANNING SAYS

People need have no fear that scholarly investigation will weaken the authority of the Bible, Bishop Manning asserted recently at a service in the Cathedral of St. John the Divine. He asserted that whatever uncertainty exists in regard to the Bible comes not from knowledge but from ignorance.

"The fact is that in the full light of modern knowledge, and welcoming every fact that science and scholarship have established, the spiritual message of the Bible and the Divine revelation which it contains stand clearer and more real to us than ever before," said the Bishop.

"We must read the Bible intelligently. The trouble with those little pamphlets about the Bible which are sent out by the atheistic societies is that they are so unutterably foolish. They show such a complete ignorance of the first principles of knowledge of the Bible.

"The first thing to keep in mind is that the revelation of God given to us in the Bble is a progressive revelation. The Old Testament is, of course, not on the same level as the New Testament. It has many things in it which show the imperfect stage of spiritual development which it represents. But it is full also of wonderful and amazing manifestations of God's light and truth."

## BIBLE SOCIETY'S WORK APPROVED BY COOLIDGE

President Coolidge, members of his Cabinet, State and city officials and other prominent persons sent messages of congratulation to the New York Bible Society, which celebrated its 118th anniversary recently in the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church. The message of the President was as follows:

"I am very sorry I shall be unable to show the very real interest I have in the valuable work of the New York Bible Society by attending the 118th anniversary service on the evening of December 4. My wish is that in the future you may be able to increase the very great services you have been rendering for so many years."

Others heard from included Secretary of State Kellogg, Secretary of the Treasury Mellon, Immigration Commissioner Benjamin M. Day, Gov. Jackson of Indiana, Gov. Ritchie of Maryland, Gov. Byrd of Virginia, Senator Copeland, Mayor Walker, Aldermanic President McKee, Alderman Ruth Pratt, Comptroller Barry and Dr. Elmer Ellsworth Brown of New York University.

## AUTUMN GALES PLAY HAVOC WITH LOBSTER POTS

The gales that recently lashed the New England coast wrought great havoc with the fishing gear of the lobstermen. Because of the exceptionally warm days in October and the early part of November, the lobsters had not crawled off into greater depths for warmth as they do in late Fall and Winter, so that most of the fishermen still had their traps set on the kelp-covered rocks near shore.

It is estimated that between 8,000 and 10,000 pots were smashed and ruined as they were rolled and raked over the sharp ledges by the crushing undertow. Such a loss is more serious today than it would have been a few years ago when fishermen made their traps of spruce and hemlock cut from the nearby forests. They fashioned the bows, frames and runners or bottom pieces, knitted and tarred the heads and slatted the pots with laths. An old-fashioned trap of this sort with a head or opening at each end was valued at about \$1.

Today nearly all the lobster pots are turned out of oak pieces at small sawmills. Fishing smacks carry great deckloads of these "knock-down" frames to all sections of the coast, the lobstermen simply assembling the pots as they are used. Heads come already knitted and treated with a chemical said to outlast tar. In the matter of treating the heads and traps, however, most of the lobstermen still stick to the old-fashioned tar.

The traps of oak are more durable than the cruder home-made variety. Many are now built with flat instead of semi-circular tops. These are said to rest more firmly on the bottom and are not rolled around so much in heavy seas. Most lobster pots now are the three-header or so-called parlor trap style. Instead of an entrance at either end, one end is slatted up. The other end has three funnels or heads, easy ways for Mr. Lobster to enter. When it comes to escaping, however, the three heads and the manner in which they are placed make this next to impossible, a distinct advantage over the old two-headers from which many crustaceans crawled back to liberty after eating the bait. These modern traps cost their owners from \$2.50 to \$3.50 each, with \$3 a fair average cost.



# Fame and Fortune Weekly

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WESTBURY PUBLISHING CO., Inc.

140 Cedar Street,

New York City